VOL. LXXVII
NOVEMBER 1972

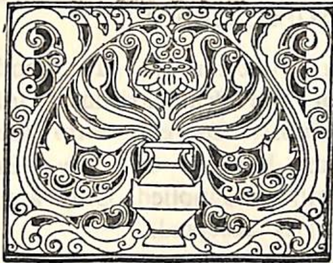
Prabuddha Bharata

OR

AWAKENED INDIA



ADVAITA ASHRAMA, MAYAVATI
HIMALAYAS



Prabuddha Bharata

Started by Swami Vivekananda in 1896

A MONTHLY JOURNAL OF THE RAMAKRISHNA ORDER

NOVEMBER 1972

Editorial Office

P.O. Mayavati, Via Lohaghat
Dt. Pithoragarh, U.P.

Publication Office

5 Dehi Entally Road
Calcutta-14
Phone: 44-2898



Annual Subscription

India, Nepal, Bangladesh, & Ceylon Rs. 8
U.S.A. $ 4.00
Other Countries £ 1.00

Life Subscription

Rs. 150 $ 100 £ 20

Single Copy

75 P. 35 cents. 10 P.

CONTENTS

Cover:
Chauren Himal, Central Himalayas, Nepal.

Information for subscribers, contributors and publishers overleaf.

INFORMATION FOR

CONTRIBUTORS

1. Unpublished original articles of universal and higher human interests pertaining to Religion, Philosophy and Culture coming from competent writers of any country are considered for publication in *Prabuddha Bharata.*

2. Articles should preferably be of medium size, typed double space on one side, not exceeding 4000 words. Paucity of space precludes acceptance of longer articles for publication, except in rare cases.

   Hand-written manuscripts are not normally considered for publication for obvious reasons.

3. The Editor is not responsible for opinions expressed in signed articles.

4. For all quotations in articles adequate references—including names of authors, publications, publishers with address, year of publication, and page number —should be provided.

6. Articles, not accepted for publication are not returned, unless so requested by contributors and adequate stamps for the purpose enclosed.

Please address all correspondence to :

THE EDITOR

PRABUDDHA BHARATA
P.O. Mayavati, Via Lohaghat
Dist. Pithoragarh, U.P.

SUBSCRIBERS

1. *Prabuddha Bharata* is a monthly Journal of the Ramakrishna Order. Intending subscribers can enrol themselves from January or July. Back numbers will be supplied. Only annual subscription is accepted.

2. Remittances may be made by money order, postal order, or bank draft. Foreign subscribers may remit through International Money Order, or Bank Draft, crossed 'A/c Payee' in favour of Prabuddha Bharata, and sent by Registered Post to avoid theft. Necessary amount for Bank Commission should be added in case of out-station cheques.

3. Please intimate change of address for three months or more before the 20th of the preceding month. For shorter periods, arrangements should be made with the local post office.

4. *Prabuddha Bharata* is always posted in the first week of every month. Complaints of non-receipt may kindly be made during the last week of the month.

5. A concession of 5% will be allowed on some of the publications of Advaita Ashrama to subscribers of *Prabuddha Bharata.*

6. Please quote your subscriber number in all correspondence.

Please address all business correspondence to :

THE MANAGER
PRABUDDHA BHARATA
5 Dehi Entally Road
Calcutta-14

A REQUEST TO PUBLISHERS

Books are reviewed in our columns by competent scholars. Normally, we review English publications only.

Publishers are requested to send *two copies* of *only* new publications for facilitating early attention.



Prabuddha Bharata

VOL. LXXVII NOVEMBER 1972 No. 11

Arise! Awake! And stop not till the Goal is reached.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA ANSWERS

Question (asked by Prankrishna): 'Sir, what is the Anahata sound?'

Sri Ramakrishna: 'It is a spontaneous sound constantly going on by itself. It is the sound of the Pranava, Om. It originates in the Supreme Brahman and is heard by yogis. People immersed in worldliness do not hear it. A yogi alone knows that this sound originates both from his navel and from the Supreme Brahman resting on the Ocean of Milk.'[1]

Question (posed by himself): 'What is the use of making pilgrimages if you can attain love of God remaining where you are?'

Sri Ramakrishna: 'I have been to Benares and noticed the same trees there as here. The same green tamarind-leaves!

'Pilgrimage becomes futile if it does not enable you to attain love of God. Love of God is the one essential and necessary thing. Do you know the meaning of "kites and vultures"? There are many people who talk big and who say that they have performed most of the duties enjoined in the scriptures. But with all that their minds are engrossed in worldliness and deeply preoccupied with money, riches, name, fame, creature comforts, and such things.'

Question (posed by himself): 'Can one find God in the sacred books?'

Sri Ramakrishna: 'By reading the scriptures one may feel at the most that God exists. But God does not reveal Himself to a man unless he himself dives deep. Only after such a plunge, after the revelation of God through His grace, is one's doubt destroyed. You may read scriptures by the thousands and recite thousands of texts; but unless you plunge into God with yearning of heart, you will not comprehend Him. By mere scholarship you may fool man, but not God.

'Scriptures and books—what can one achieve with these alone? Nothing

---

1 According to Hindu mythology, after the dissolution of the universe and before the next creation, the Supreme Lord rests on the Ocean of the Great Cause, also called the 'Ocean of Milk'.

can be realized without His grace. Strive with a longing heart for His grace. Through His grace you will see Him and He will talk to you.'

Question (posed by himself): 'How much of the scriptures can you read? What will you gain by mere reasoning?'

Sri Ramakrishna: 'Try to realize God before anything else. Have faith in the guru's words, and work. If you have no guru, then pray to God with a longing heart. He will let you know what He is like.

'What will you learn of God from books? As long as you are at a distance from the market-place you hear only an indistinct roar. But it is quite different when you are actually there. Then you hear and see everything distinctly. You hear people saying: "Here are your potatoes. Take them and give me the money."

'From a distance you hear only the rumbling noise of the ocean. Go near it and you will see many boats sailing about, birds flying, and waves rolling.

'One cannot get true feeling about God from the study of books. This feeling is something very different from book-learning. Books, scriptures, and science appear as mere dirt and straw after the realization of God.

'The one thing needful is to be introduced to the master of the house. Why are you so anxious to know beforehand how many houses and gardens, and how many government securities, the master possesses? The servants of the house would not allow you even to approach these, and they would certainly not tell you about their master's investments. Therefore, somehow or other become acquainted with the master, even if you have to jump over the fence or take a few pushes from the servants. Then the master himself will tell you all about his houses and gardens and his government securities. And what is more, the servants and the door-keeper will salute you when you are known to the master.'

Question (asked by a devotee): 'Now the question is how to become acquainted with the master.'

Sri Ramakrishna: 'That is why I say that work is necessary. It will not do to say that God exists and then idle away your time. You must reach God somehow or other. Call on Him in solitude and pray to Him, "O Lord! reveal Thyself to me." Weep for Him with a longing heart. You roam about in search of "woman and gold" like a madman; now be a little mad for God. Let people say, "This man has lost his head for God." Why not renounce everything for a few days and call on God in solitude?

'What will you achieve by simply saying that God exists and doing nothing about it? There are big fish in the Haldarpukur; but can you catch them by merely sitting idly on the bank? Prepare some spiced bait and throw it into the lake. Then the fish will come from the deep water and you will see ripples. That will make you happy. Perhaps a fish will jump with a splash and you will get a glimpse of it. Then you will be so glad!'

ONWARD FOR EVER !

In this universe where nothing is lost, where we live in the midst of death in life, every thought that is thought, in public or in private, in crowded thoroughfares or in the deep recesses of primeval forests, lives....Nothing can be destroyed—those thoughts that caused evil in the past are also seeking embodiment, to be filtered through repeated expression and, at last, transfigured into perfect good.

As such, there is a mass of thought which is at the present time struggling to get expression. This new thought is telling us to give up our dreams of dualism, of good and evil in essence, and the still wilder dream of suppression. It teaches us that higher direction and not destruction is the law. It teaches us that it is not a world of bad and good, but good and better—and still better. It stops short of nothing but acceptance. It teaches that no situation is hopeless, and as such accepts every form of mental, moral, or spiritual thought where it already stands, and without a word of condemnation tells it that so far it has done good, now is the time to do better. What in old times was thought of as the elimination of bad, it teaches as the transfiguration of evil and the doing of better. It, above all, teaches that the kingdom of heaven is already in existence if we will have it, that perfection is already in man if he will see it.

Vivekananda

SPIRITUAL DROUGHT—SOME CAUSES AND REMEDIES—I

EDITORIAL

I

When a certain enquirer expressed his surprise at the failure of the majority of spiritual aspirants—including the 'whole-timers'—to attain their exalted goal, an octogenarian monk of the Ramakrishna Order, with a straight spine and an alert mind, replied with a meaningful laugh, 'Haven't you read in the *Gītā* that out of thousands one perhaps struggles for perfection, and even among such strugglers one perchance realizes God ? That is a fact which applies to all seekers, whole- or part-timers.' Despite all that is said and written these days about 'Spiritual life made easy', *living* the actual *life of the spirit* remains extremely difficult. The razor's edge path of the Upaniṣadic sages—or the 'strait gate and narrow way' of the Galilean Prophet—has not lost any of its sharpness or hardgoingness. Regarding the nature of spiritual ideal and its aspirants a timeless truth has been uttered by the *Gītā*.

'Of one hundred persons who take up the spiritual life', grimly warned Swami Vivekananda once, 'eighty turn out to be charlatans, fifteen insane, and five, maybe, get a glimpse of the real truth. Therefore, beware.'[1] The warning need not make us scary but wary. Such a staggering percentage of failures is principally due to the seductive powers of māyā, the modest calibre of the aspirants, and the supremely subtle nature of Spirit or Reality. Let the warning make us more determined to belong to the small percentage of those who 'get a glimpse of the real truth'.

Why should there be so many charlatans among those who profess to tread the most righteous path ? Why should some others

---

1 Swami Nikhilananda: *Vivekananda A Biography* (Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati, Almora, Himalayas, 1964), p. 57.

go mad? Of course, God or religion cannot be held responsible for these people's charlatanry and madness. There are some who blame religion and blast God for the hypocrisy of the followers, but that is a mistake. The blame must lie squarely on the spiritual aspirants themselves. Possibly some have just strayed into the spiritual path without the right aim, attitude, and aptitude. But once having come to that path, they may be feeling it odd or defeatist to go back to the worldly life. Neither do they find any meaning, joy or fulfilment in the spiritual life. So, what else can they do but pretend to be spiritual men? It is rather easy to pretend to be so, because being spiritual does not demand any spectacular external signs. 'Charlatan' is significantly derived from two Italian words which mean 'to chatter' and 'a hawker'. So it will be enough if the pretender has learnt to talk well on religious themes and collect a following!

If some of the spiritual seekers become insane, let us make it clear, it is not because of their hankering for God. If it be for God—as in the case of the god-men of different religions—, then, blessed is such insanity. For out of that will come the highest wisdom which will cure the insanity of 'lust and lucre'. But, in fact, that madness is due to an unmethodical approach to spiritual life, and deep-seated psychological complexes, compulsions, and frustrations. Such persons deserve our pity, not condemnation.

Three very rare things are obtained in this world only through God's grace, says Śaṅkara in a celebrated verse; and they are 'a human birth, a longing for liberation, and the protecting care of a perfected sage'. Human birth we all have though very few of us appreciate its value. What about the longing for liberation? That is the prime question. If the seeker has that genuine longing, even a measure of it, he will never become a charlatan. Real longing for liberation implies an utter disgust for worldly values of possessions and wealth, physical beauty and enjoyment, name and fame, status and power. Real longing for the Divine denotes an utter dissatisfaction with and dread of sense- and ego-oriented life and the sequel of repeated birth and death. How can such a man become a charlatan? In the event of getting the protecting care of an illumined teacher, a spiritual aspirant will not run the risk of turning insane which is the result of a wrong approach to spiritual life.

Mukti or liberation, remarks Śaṅkara in the preceding verse, is not attainable except through the well-earned merits of a billion lives.[2]

II

A billion or more times a soul will have to be born in this world for accumulating enough *puṇya* or merit to enable it to attain liberation. Since *avidyā* (ignorance), the cause of bondage and rebirth, is said to be beginningless, it actually means taking countless number of births before getting that fund of merit. In the meantime a great lot of unfavourable *saṁskāras* (impressions) will also have been acquired. These create the thirst for worldly enjoyment and the clinging to life common to all living beings. Māyā, as Sri Ramakrishna has pointed out, has two aspects: *avidyā* (ignorance) and *vidyā* (knowledge). If *avidyā-māyā* fortifies worldly bondage, *vidyā-māyā* helps in breaking the bonds. These two can be compared to the centripetal and centrifugal forces of this *saṁsāra-cakra* or the 'wheel of relative existence'. While the accumulated fund of merits helps the liberating forces of *vidyā-māyā,* the aggregate of unfavourable impressions rein-

---

2 मुक्तिर्नो शतजन्मकोटिसुकृतैः पुण्यैर्विना लभ्यते ।
Viveka-cūḍāmaṇi, 2.

forces the binding power of *avidyā-māyā*. Unless the power of these sinister forces is considerably curbed through self-control, prayer, meditation, and divine contemplation, it is not possible to make any spiritual progress and achieve liberation. That is why even those who have acquired a sincere longing for liberation have to carry on a prolonged and intense struggle.

Once someone said to Sri Ramakrishna, 'Sir, can you teach me what you call *samādhi* in five minutes?' We can guess what Sri Ramakrishna's answer could have been. If a man living in the pre-motorcar age could speak like that, we, living in the jet plane and rocket age, would like to learn *samādhi* in a much shorter time! There may be some 'jet age yogis' who may be willing to teach too! But the truth of the matter is, the more we preoccupy ourselves with māyā and its toys the less chance there is of our moving nearer God. Barring possibly the intervention of God's grace, there is no instant destroyer of the sinister impressions of countless number of lives. One has to work patiently at them, maybe for a few years or a lifetime, maybe for many, many lives.

The Holy Mother Sri Sarada Devi, who was considered by many as the Divine Mother in human disguise, used to be pestered by some of her devotees and disciples with such requests as, 'Mother, show us the Lord'! 'Show the Master to us!' 'You can surely do this for us, if you will!' She, who was the embodiment of love and patience, would reply in a persuasive but firm way. She would say :

> 'How many of our venerable Yogis and Rishis of old failed to find Him even after practising severe austerities for ages upon ages! And yet these expect to achieve everything in a trice! They neither carry out spiritual discipline, nor practise austerities or self-control, and yet they say, "Show Him to us at once!" Who knows what evil deeds they have committed in so many past lives! How can they hope for higher things before these have been gradually worked out? If Realization is not had in this birth, it may come in the next, or it may even come in the life after the next. But come it must if you go on working for it. Is realization of God so easy? Only, this time, with the advent of Thakur (Sri Ramakrishna) and the path shown by him, it is easier, that is all. They are living a worldly life and begetting children every year, and yet they come and say, why don't I have the vision of the Divine Master? Women used to go to Thakur and say, "Why does not the mind turn to God? Why doesn't it get steady?" and so on. The Master would answer them: "Ah! How can that be now? There is still the smell of childbirth about you. Let that first leave you. It will come in the fullness of time. It is enough for this life that you have come to me. In the next life the spiritual path will be easy of attainment for you." A vision may be had of Him in dreams, perhaps. But actually seeing Him with these eyes, or His showing Himself to a devotee by assuming a body—to how many does that happen? That is rare good fortune, indeed.'[3]

Rather a long passage for being used as a quotation. But very rewarding reading for all sincere seekers. Coming as it does from one whose authority on spiritual matters is equal to that of Sri Ramakrishna's, this should set at rest all tendency in us to spiritual impatience and querulousness.

Some Vedāntic teachers declare that the mind itself is the *saṁsāra* or relative existence. If that is controlled, purified and merged in the Reality, then one becomes enlightened and free. But that is easier said than done. Those who have attempted even a little to control their minds will have known how difficult and perplexing a job

---

[3] Swami Virajananda : *Towards the Goal Supreme* (Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati, 1968), pp. 132-3.

it is. In the *Gītā,* Arjuna, the great hero, compares it to the task of curbing the wind. In the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha,* a text teeming with stern Vedāntic ideas, Śrī Rāma says to Viśwāmitra :

> 'O Holy man, subjugating the mind is more difficult than drinking up the ocean, or uprooting the mighty mountain Sumeru, or feeding on fire.'[4]

Śrī Rāma, who was even a greater warrior than Arjuna, could have accomplished all those apparently impossible feats which to him seemed easier than controlling the mind.

A seeker may feel that he is absolutely sincere, nevertheless he should learn to be patient and to persevere in spiritual endeavours. His policy should be to keep his 'longing' at white heat while cultivating 'Himalayan patience and eternal perseverance'. Swami Brahmananda, who was not only a saint himself but also a saint-maker, once urged a drought-plagued disciple thus:

> 'Can anything be achieved without spiritual discipline? Do you not see what severe disciplines even the Avataras (Incarnations of God) had to perform? Has anybody gained anything without labour? Buddha, Sankara and others —what tremendous austerities they practised in their lives! What burning renunciation they possessed!'[5]

III

What Spiritual Drought is

Dryness in spiritual life is a common enough phenomenon. It has been experienced, observed, and commented upon by almost every great saint, mystic, and teacher. Generally it occurs some time after an aspirant starts his spiritual practices. Surely it is a trying period. The aspirant then feels his soul to be 'like an arid desert', 'desolate and deprived of all feelings of devotion'. He feels further that all sweetness in his inner life has evaporated and that he is literally 'Godforsaken'. Some saints have compared this stage to the weaning of a child. A child during the weaning period is apt to feel that the mother has ceased to love and care for it. But the purpose of the mother is to make the child grow up and be self-dependent. To a majority of spiritual aspirants this appears to be a total abandonment by God and extremely unbearable; they make a permanent turnabout from God. Most of the 'charlatans' among religious people referred to by Swami Vivekananda are possibly manufactured at this stage. A few of those who persist, without proper preparation and guidance, become unhinged.

But those who have genuine 'longing for liberation' and the protection of an able guide, and are not 'shop-keepers' in their love for God persevere steadily and hopefully. Their determination 'to realize God or give up the body' is firm as adamant. Of course, they are tried severely. At moments they feel themselves to be on the borderland of despair. They experience the pangs of purgation which approximate hell-suffering. But they stick to their path and ideals with grim resolve. And it is these few, a handful out of thousands, who realize the Lord and become founts of inspiration and lamps of guidance to other seekers.

'Dark Night of the Soul'

St. John of The Cross, one of the most luminous stars in the firmament of Christian mysticism, calls this period of spiritual drought or aridity as the 'dark night of the soul'. But he divides this dark night into two parts, namely, 'sensual' and 'spiritual'. In his great classic on spiritual life *Dark*

---

4 अप्यब्धिपानान्महतः सुमेरून्मूलनादपि ।
अपि वह्न्यशनात् साधो विषमश्चित्तनिग्रहः ॥
Quoted in *Pañcadaśī,* VII. 121.

5 Swami Prabhavananda: *The Eternal Companion* (Sri Ramakrishna Math, Madras 4, 1945), p. 153.

Night of the Soul—which every spiritual seeker can read with immense profit—, he explains how the beginner first passes through the night of 'senses' and, if he persists to become a progressive, later through the night of spiritual purgation. In his own words :

> 'This night . . . produces in spiritual persons two kinds of darkness or purgation, corresponding to the two parts of man's nature—namely, the sensual and the spiritual. And thus the one night or purgation will be sensual, wherein the soul is purged according to sense, which is subdued to the spirit; and the other is a night or purgation which is spiritual, wherein the soul is purged and stripped according to the spirit, and subdued and made ready for the union of love with God. The night of sense is common and comes to many : these are the beginners. . . . The night of the spirit is the portion of very few, and these are they that are already practised and proficient. . . .'[6]

The 'night of sense', as the mystic points out, comes to almost all. Because the majority of beginners are victims of one or more of the seven capital sins, namely, pride, avarice, (lust and) luxury, wrath, gluttony, envy, and sloth. When an aspirant frees himself from these deadly sins—condensed and designated by the *Gītā* as the threefold gateway (to hell) of lust-anger-greed—, he enters the state of the progressive. In this state also he has to pass through the 'dark night'. But this purgatory experience is completely different from the earlier one. On the one hand, the mind and soul of the aspirant now have become greatly purified and he has acquired considerable depth and serenity; on the other, his suffering on account of separation from the Lord is 'bone-scorching'. But the aspirant who arrives at this stage of spiritual pilgrimage, like the moth which sees a bright light, will almost never turn back.

'Rat-holes' in Mental Fields

'Do I *want* God ? ' Every spiritual seeker has to keep on asking himself this question till he arrives at his destination. Because the mind plays many tricks. The Devil that Christian saints frequently speak about in tones of alarm is a permanent lodger in the mental basement! Even if God Himself were to come and offer us things other than Himself, we should be alert to tell Him, 'Please reserve those things for Yourself. I want You only.' But such aspirants are indeed rare. As a great spiritual teacher once said :

> 'If God comes and says: "What do you want? Do you want me—or do you want to live a happy life full of name, fame, health and wealth for a hundred years with wife, children and grandchildren?"—you will find that, except, perhaps, for one in ten million, all will eagerly pray for the latter.'[7]

Sri Ramakrishna spoke of a farmer who wanted to irrigate his field where crops were drying up. After backbreaking labour throughout the day he succeeded in bringing water to the field by evening. He went home gladly with visions of a rich harvest. But when he returned there next morning he found to his dismay the field as dry as before. On investigation he found several rat-holes in the field and ridges through which all the water had drained off. Sri Ramakrishna compared the farmer to the spiritual aspirant, the field to his mind, and rat-holes to desires. If an aspirant experiences spiritual drought, he should closely search his mind for possible rat-holes, namely, desires, and plug them up. 'No matter how much *sādhanā* you practice,' Sri Ramakrishna once said to a beloved disciple, 'you will not realize the goal as long as you have desire.'

---

6 St. John of The Cross: *Dark Night of the Soul* (Tr. and ed. by E. Allison Peers, Image Books, Garden City, New York, 1959), p. 61.

7 Swami Virajananda: op. cit., p. 14.

Rowing an Anchored Boat

Once Swami Turiyananda had been to Nag Mahasaya's house. Nag Mahasaya was a great householder disciple of Sri Ramakrishna and lived an unsullied life like his Master. There at his house, Nag Mahasaya's aged father was practising *japa* (repetition of God's name) sitting in a corner. Nag Mahasaya said to Swami Turiyananda, 'Bless my father that he may have true devotion to God.' 'He has already got it,' replied the Swami. 'He is constantly repeating the name of God. What more do you want?' Nag Mahasaya rejoined, 'What is the use of rowing a boat which is at anchor? My father is much attached to me. What good will his *japa* do?'[8]

When the great saint referred to rowing a boat at anchor, he was alluding to a story in which several drunks got into a boat at night and at once began to row. When sobriety came with the morning, they found the boat had not moved an inch. They were so intoxicated that they did not remember to weigh anchor.

All those seekers who experience inner dryness must make a thorough self-analysis to find out if their minds are anchored with worldly attachments. Some among them may have so much of worldliness that they, being unaware of it, may be even rowing a beached boat! Thus they will be going the drunks one better!

Patañjali's Diagnosis

Patañjali, the ancient teacher of Yoga, lists nine impediments to progress on the path of superconscious realization.[9] Some of them are directly, some indirectly, responsible for causing the inner aridity. 'Doubt' about the truth of God and the real worth of spiritual life seizes the aspirant. If some aspirants feel atheism inexorably coming over them, it is owing to this impediment. 'Lack of enthusiasm' is another which slowly compels the aspirant to discontinue his devotional practices. 'Non-attaining concentration' is another obstacle which indicates the presence of lurking desires and ambitions. Yet another obstacle is 'falling away from the state when attained'. Though this is natural in spiritual life, it is likely to accentuate dryness. That is more so when the aspirant lacks a competent guru.

Half-heartedness and Ego-centricity

As a general diagnosis of dryness, Swami Turiyananda points out the lack of whole-souled and intense effort to realize God. 'Just see!' he says, 'Most frequently God is nothing more than a matter of words, a verbal expression. A little meditation, a little *japam* and this is considered sufficient religion. What a life of poverty!'

Continuing, he emphasizes in burning words the need to surrender the ego to God and to remain perfectly sincere and steadfast:

> 'The heart must burst with hunger for Him. Nothing but complete self-surrender to Him will satisfy such intense longing. You call Him the inner controller, omniscient and omnipresent, and still you waver and fear to surrender yourself to Him! Thinkest thou that thou wilt realize God the Mother by hypocritical devotion? No, no, this is not a sweet in a child's hand that thou wilt cajole it out of Her. There is no deceiving God. He sees all. If you love anything other than God and do not renounce all for Him, you cannot realize Him. If one considers God to be all in all, how can one find joy in worldly things?'[10]

8 *Spiritual Talks* (Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati, 1944), p. 135.

9 *Yoga-sūtras*, I. 30.

10 Swami Turiyananda: 'Spiritual Talks', *Vedanta For Modern Man* (Ed. by Christopher Isherwood, Harper and Brothers Publishers, New York, 1951), p. 62.

LETTERS OF A SAINT

THE LORD MY REFUGE

Almora
25.10.15

Dear . . .,

. . . I am very much pained to read of the distressed condition of Bankura. . . ., in his letter, has given a heart-rending description of it. At this hour, instead of making yourselves blessed by serving the distressed whole-heartedly to your utmost capacity, you have shown signs of an utter misapprehension. I am dumbfounded and extremely sorry on reading it. You have asked me to bless you that you may be freed from this work. But freeing yourself from this, what other work will you do? Serve the Lord?

'Who loves all beings without distinction,
He indeed is worshipping best his God.'[1]

What, have you forgotten these words? Swamiji has laid out for you such an easy means of liberation, but you seem to be forgetting it so soon!

'These are His manifold forms before thee,
Rejecting them, where seekest thou for God?'[2]

'No man can ever attain to actionlessness by merely abstaining from work.'[3]

Without doing work, how will you gain freedom from it? Holding such misconceptions and indulging in idleness don't try to subject yourselves to the quality of *tamas* (inertia). Better, working wholeheartedly,—why working, worshipping, for service to *jīva*, the individual soul, is not work, it is truly the worship of the Lord; doing this real worship—make your life blessed. Know it for certain that such opportunities do not come always.

What more to write?

SRI TURIYANANDA

---

1 Swami Vivekananda: From a Bengali poem 'To A Friend', *vide The Complete Works* (Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati, Almora, Himalayas), Vol. IV (1962), p. 496.

2 ibid.

3 *Bhagavad-gītā*, III.4.

THE LORD MY REFUGE

Almora
31.10.15

Dear . . .,

Glad to receive your letter of the 27th May enclosing two rough sketches. Earlier also I have seen the *cakra* (a mystic diagram circular in shape) of this kind published by the Theosophical Society and also prepared by one or two persons. But best of all is the *cakra* of the body within which even

Brahmā and Viṣṇu[1] are caught gasping for breath. So Sri Ramakrishna used to sing:

'O Mother, what a machine[2] is this that Thou hast made!
What pranks Thou playest with this toy
Three and a half cubits high!
Hiding Thyself within, Thou holdest the guiding string;
But the machine, not knowing it,
Still believes it moves by itself.
Whoever finds the Mother remains a machine no more;
Yet some machines have even bound
The Mother Herself with the string of Love.'[3]

She is in this body-contraption. Only by knowing Her can one escape from this contraption. Otherwise you will be whirled round and round endlessly—'Sorrows and joys come by turn like the movement of a wheel'.

Hence says Rāmprasād, 'O Mother, remove the blindfold on my eyes, and let me see Thy feet that banish fear.'

May Mother be gracious to take away this blindfolding from our eyes—is my earnest prayer to Her.

Sri Turiyananda

---

1 According to Hindu mythology, Brahmā is the Creator and Viṣṇu the Preserver of this whole creation.

2 The human body.

3 A song of Rāmprasād, a mystic-poet of Bengal.

The Lord My Refuge

Almora
3.11.15

Dear ...,

I am aggrieved to read of the terrible food scarcity there. The Lord alone knows what His will is. But you go on helping as best as you can; let there be no omission in your work. I do not like your arguments, they are of no use. Do you know that there is a proverb, 'Cut the coat according to the cloth'? You can give away to others according to the goods you possess. It cannot be otherwise. But whether or not that gift is made with *śraddhā* (reverential faith) and sympathy is in your hands. And in that alone will be revealed your attitude. You are not the servants of anybody to do it as official duty; you will be doing the work in the spirit of discharging a religious duty. Of course your superiors are bound to spend only as much as they get but when they do not have enough fund, what can they do? So if you also spend as much as you receive, there can be no trouble in it. The trouble lies with the attitude. All the goods that you have belong to Annapūrṇā, the Divine Mother—knowing this if you can make use of them, it becomes fruitful. Else, what is the good of mentioning those things which are not there at all? You might have read that

when the son of a general complained to his father that because of the shortness of his sword he could not kill his enemies, the father replied, 'Add a step to it.' This is the right advice. Otherwise, the situation will be as is expressed in these sayings: 'The son wants that which is not found in the country', 'Those who do not know dancing, blame the floor of the courtyard', 'Those who know the game, play with even a counterfeit coin',[1] etc. The Lord hungers for the right attitude (of devotion and surrender). He ate the broken rice-grains from Vidura and plantain-peel from his wife's hands.[2] These facts are well known and everybody talks about them. The thing that matters is the attitude: your entire mind should be in it; then only it will click. You need not see what others are doing; you look to yourself—'How do I act?' The saying, 'If I am good, the whole world is good', is perfectly true.

SRI TURIYANANDA

1 These are Bengali proverbs, here literally translated.

2 Reference to an incident in *Mahābhārata* when Śrī Kṛṣṇa refused the royal hospitality of the proud Duryodhana but accepted that of Vidura who was poor, humble and deeply devoted to God.

MAN AND THE UNIVERSE

PROF. PRIYADARANJAN RAY

The universe with its myriads of luminous heavenly bodies and multitudes of material objects, both living and non-living, on the earth, as well as with varieties of natural phenomena, is revealed to man almost spontaneously at the very dawn of his childhood. This occurs as a result of the impact of the external world upon our sense organs. The impressions of the external world in the form of some sort of energy waves reaching our sense organs are carried by the sensitive nerves to the centre of our brain, where by a mysterious mechanism they are coordinated and projected on the mental screen as definite images of the external objects and phenomena. The events and objects of the external world appear to us arranged in a framework of space-time pattern. We acquire an idea of time as past, present and future from our sense perception of the succession of events occurring in the external world; similarly the idea of a three-dimensional space is derived by us from our sense perceptions of the relative positions of objects of the external world in three directions—right and left, front and back, and up and down. Whether the image of the external world thus produced on our mind is an exact replica of the latter, is beyond all human intellect to determine. Modern science has demonstrated that our sense perception cannot be relied upon as a true guide to our knowledge. Both science and philosophy therefore agree that things are not what they seem. In fact both the Sāṅkhya and the Vedānta systems of the ancient Indian philosophy have described the external world as māyā (illusion)—an apparent reality or relative truth.

It need hardly be stressed upon that the

capacity and the sensitiveness of our sense organs have their obvious limitations. We cannot see things which are too small or too far away from us ; one and the same thing may appear to be of different sizes or of different colours under different circumstances. For instance, the sun at the time of its rising and setting appears like quite a big red bright disc while at midday we see it as a small dazzling white disc. Looking at a photograph or a picture we may admire the figure of a person or the drawing of a landscape but when viewed under a microscope they are nothing but randomly arranged variously coloured dots. Science has demonstrated that the sun is an intensely hot vast globular mass of plasma of electrons, protons, neutrons, and other fundamental particles under an extremely high pressure, surrounded by a mantle of flaming gas extending over 5000 miles from its surface with its diameter 110 times as large as that of the earth at a distance of ninetythree million miles from the earth and of which we can have no idea from our mere sense perception. Our vision can distinguish only seven colours of light ranging from red to violet but we fail to obtain a direct perception of many other forms of light rays of wave lengths shorter than that of violet, namely ultraviolet, X-rays, gamma rays, and cosmic rays as well as of light rays of wave lengths longer than that of red light such as infrared, electric waves, and radio waves. To a person sensitive to these rays the universe should present quite a different picture than the one of our daily life. Thus the knowledge of the universe which we acquire directly from our sense perception is a very imperfect, partial and even a misleading one of individual objects and isolated events. We see the sun moving from east to west every day round the earth but science has proved that it is quite otherwise. The knowledge acquired by sense perception does not also enable us to obtain the idea of any relationship amongst these isolated objects and events or of the why and how of things. The world of direct sense perceptions is thus one of immense diversity, with no connecting link between the observed facts and phenomena or among themselves.

But man is a creature endowed with a thinking mind, intellect, and reason. With the growth of his intellect and reasoning faculty he seeks to establish some unity amidst diversities. By designing and using powerful instruments he tries to improve the capacity of his sense organs and seeks by means of experiments, observations, and reasoning to explore some connecting link among the diverse facts and phenomena of sense perceptions. This has given rise to the birth of science with its classification of isolated observations and recognition of natural laws. Science has thus developed its own methodology to seek an answer to the why and how of things. This has led to the formulation of the law of causality in its attempt to explore the real nature of the universe or the Ultimate Truth, starting obviously from the basis of sense perception. It has succeeded in building up a picture of the universe or the external world entirely different from that of our everyday life of sense perception. As is now well known, science has resolved all matter into electrons, positrons, and neutrons and all energy into photons and waves. What is more, the duality of matter and energy has now practically vanished with their distinction as corpuscles and waves, which are now believed to be two different aspects of one and the same entity and are mutually convertible by means of Einstein's equation $E=mc^2$, where E=the energy, m=the mass and c=the velocity of light. This has been verified by the invention of atomic bombs and nuclear weapons. This is undoubtedly a remarkable achieve-

ment of the human intellect. Nevertheless, it must be admitted that science has not yet found the final answer to the why of things and of the original or the ultimate cause and nature of the universe (Absolute Truth or Reality). For, scientific truths are always open to correction and continued perfection, as human intellect has also its own limitations. Science is therefore defined as a never-ending search after an ever-receding goal. Scientific truths therefore are also partial or relative, nay even elusive. In its attempt to explore the ultimate nature of the universe, science has now come to the conclusion that this external world has emerged out of an all-pervading electromagnetic field or what is known as space in common parlance, whose nature can only be represented by mathematical equations involving symbols, that is, constants like *c*, *g*, *h*, etc. representing the velocity of light, gravitational constant and Planck's constant, respectively. For instance light energy is now shown to behave sometimes as energy waves (as in interference phenomena), while on some other occasions as corpuscles, quanta, or photons (as in photoelectric effect). Of this we can have no physical picture. When light behaves as waves one may naturally question—waves of what? To answer this scientists assumed the existence of an all-pervading, imponderable, hypothetical mysterious substance called ether which is now practically identified with space or electromagnetic field. Science has here entered into the domain of philosophy. The picture of the universe presented by science vanishes practically into nothingness, which may be compared to the *māyāvāda* (the doctrine of māyā) of the Vedānta.

Both in the Sāṅkhya and Vedānta schools of philosophy space is represented by *ākāśa,* which appears in two forms in two successive stages of evolution, non-atomic or original (*kāraṇākāśa* or *purāṇam kham*) and atomic or derivative (*karyākāśā*, *vāyuram kham*). The former represents the motionless, ubiquitous, undifferentiated, and all-pervasive seat or vehicle of energy waves and is devoid of the property of impenetrability. This corresponds to ether of the physicists and must not be confounded with vacuum, which is a negative concept. This non-atomic *ākāśa* may also be identified with space (*avakāśa*), or with the electromagnetic field in our modern conception. The latter (atomic *ākāśa*) is derived from the non-atomic form and represents the primordial elementary material essence (the *ākāśa tanmātra*) from which the other elementary essences (*sūkṣma-bhūtas*) are formed by collocation. This representation of the birth of matter from seat of energy or space in ancient Indian philosophy may be compared to the theory of cosmogony recently formulated by astrophysicist Hoyle.

We thus see that there are two main avenues through which we gain an acquaintance of the external world or the material universe: (1) sense perception, and (2) intellect and reason. In the first we have an experience of a diversity of things or objects existing in the external world and of a succession of isolated events in a framework of space and time since our very birth without any effort on our part. This is a spontaneous gift of nature presented to us as a result of the contact of our sense organs with the external world. When we try to probe this picture of the universe gained through sense perceptions by the application of our intellect and reason—through analysis, classification, systematization and generalization—, we are led to the discovery of the laws of nature on the fundamental assumption that there is a law and order in the universe represented mainly by the law of causality and the law of uniformity of nature. This demonstrates

as stated before that the picture of the world of sense perceptions as tested by intellect and reason is imperfect, partial and even elusive.

But at the same time the picture of the universe gained through the efforts of our intellect and reason is entirely different from that of our sense perceptions and is incapable of being grasped by sense perceptions or of being amenable to physical concepts. It is ultimately represented merely by a number of mathematical equations, formulae and symbolic constants, as has been discussed before. It must however be admitted that the sense perceptions provide the source materials of our intellectual knowledge or constitute the stepping-stone thereto. The intellectual picture of the universe also fails like that of sense perceptions, to represent the Reality, Truth, Perfect Knowledge, regarding the nature of the universe, for it is incapable of defining the ultimate or original cause in the chain of causality or of answering how and by whom the 'Law and Order' of the universe is maintained. Thus we find that our knowledge about the universe gained through the avenue of intellect and reason is also partial, imperfect and elusive.

It may be pointed out that intellect and reason responsible mainly for the growth of scientific knowledge are concerned with the understanding of the material universe taking little notice of life and consciousness playing any part in the acquisition of our knowledge about Reality, Truth or the nature of the universe. This is not surprising in view of the limitations of human intellect and reason like those of sense perceptions. It cannot be denied that intellect fails to gauge the depth of the Infinite. It only shows that Reality or the exact nature of the universe which is the same thing as Absolute Truth or Perfect Knowledge is beyond the grasp of human intellect and reason.

The ancient Indian philosophies particularly the Sāṅkhya and the Vedānta have, however, advanced remarkable hypotheses, not differing essentially from each other, regarding the exact nature of the universe or the Reality, in which consciousness plays the most important role in the process of cosmogenesis. The Reality or the Absolute Truth, as is represented in the Sāṅkhya philosophy as Puruṣa—and as Paramātman or Brahman in the Vedānta—is the ultimate cause of the universe. Puruṣa in the Sāṅkhya is designated as the Absolute, the Soul, the Ātman, or the transcendental Self and is incapable of modification or affection of any kind either as subject or object. The Sāṅkhya of Kapila is therefore usually viewed as not accepting Īśvara or God while the Sāṅkhya of Patañjali on the other hand emphasizes a divine source of the universe or the creation as a whole. Brahman in the Vedānta is represented as the Reality-Intelligence-Bliss Absolute—the Paramātman or Puruṣottama—and is formless, nameless, and incapable of definition and description. Brahman is viewed as pure consciousness. In the *Bhagavad-gītā*, Brahman is defined as follows:

> I will now describe that which ought to be known, through the knowing of which one attains Immortality. It is the Supreme Brahman, which is without beginning and is said to be neither being nor non-being.
>
> Its hands and feet are everywhere; Its eyes, heads, and faces are everywhere; Its ears are everywhere; Its existence envelops all.
>
> It shines through the functions of all the senses, and yet It is devoid of senses. It is unattached, and yet It sustains all. It is devoid of gunas, and yet It enjoys them. It is without and within all beings. It is unmoving and also moving. It is incomprehensible because It is subtle. It is far away, and yet It is near.
>
> It is indivisible, and yet It is, as it were,

divided among beings. That Knowable Brahman is the Sustainer of all beings, and also their Devourer and Generator.

The Light even of lights, It is said to be beyond darkness. As knowledge, the object of knowledge, and the goal of knowledge, It is set firm in the hearts of all.[1]

The coexistence of such contradictory qualities is unthinkable, incomprehensible and inexpressible (*avāṅmanaso-gocaram*). Thus the Reality or the Absolute Truth—call it Brahman, Paramātman or God—is beyond the grasp of human intellect. But the relation between the universe and its source, Brahman (Reality or Pure Consciousness), can be realized occasionally through intuition or illumined intelligence (*saṁjñā* or *prajñā*). Now the question arises, how to distinguish between intellect and intuition. Intuition is a universal perception, unquestionable, and acceptable to all, while intellectual knowledge is ever subject to improvement and modification, and there is no finality of intellectual knowledge. The source of intellect and reason is the human mind while intuition is usually represented as the voice of the universal self or God. Mahatma Gandhi used to call it his inner voice. This is also equivalent to the 'categorical imperative' of the German philosopher Kant.

[1] *Bhagavad-gītā*, XIII. 12-7.

Following our sense perceptions we come to know of diversity of objects and succession of events in a framework of space and time. Following intellect and reason we can know the knower (the human mind), while following intuition we can know its source or the universal self or the Paramātman, that is the Reality or Absolute Truth. For instance, when we say I exist or the universe exists, it represents an irrefutable truth which requires no proof from any one. This is a knowledge which is not acquired by our sense perceptions and intellectual efforts. This knowledge of faith is therefore an intuitive knowledge. The same holds good for the faith that there is a law and order in the universe ; therefore, it also comes under the category of intuitive knowledge. The intuitive knowledge can therefore lead us to the perception of Absolute Truth, the Reality, or the exact nature of the universe, which, as has been discussed above, is identified with Paramātman or Brahman in the ancient Indian philosophy. The method of science developed by human intellect is therefore incapable of realizing the Absolute Truth or Reality. For this it is necessary to imbibe the spirit of religion through intuition as emphasized in the ancient Indian philosophies and elegantly summarized in the *Bhagavad-gītā* through the threefold path of spiritual knowledge (*jñāna*), dedicated work and service of humanity (*karma*), and devotion to God (*bhakti*).

SWAMI ADBHUTANANDA'S MEMORIES OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA

Translated By
Swami Chetanananda and Brahmachari Bhumachaitanya

One day Sri Ramakrishna asked Latu: 'Do you know who is within this body?'

'No, I don't,' Latu replied.

'Here only God exists,' said Ramakrishna. 'Do not forget this [referring to himself].'

'How can I forget one who is so compassionate and loving toward me?' answered Latu.

Latu (premonastic name of Adbhutananda) did not forget. For the rest of his life his mind was filled with the thought of Sri Ramakrishna. And, in his own humble way, he would reveal to others the substance of these thoughts. Latu Maharaj was almost constantly in attendance on Sri Ramakrishna, until the latter's final days on earth. Therefore, his reminiscences have a special value for us in their wealth of detail and insight.

* *

Today [March 11, 1883, Sri Ramakrishna's birthday], the Master asked me to bring him some water from the Ganga. He finished his bath with one pitcher of water. Afterwards, he went to the Kālī temple. We had to work in the kitchen. Nearly 100 to 150 people had their meal on that occasion, and whatever was left from the meal was distributed to the poor. Manomohan babu brought a *kīrtan* (devotional music) party from Konnagar, and the Master sang with the party. He asked us to join with him in the Panchavati. The Master said that day that he was not only a *sannyāsin,* but a king among the *sannyāsins.*

Once, while staying at Dakshineswar, Rakhal [later Swami Brahmananda] became sick. The Master asked Rakhal: 'Hello, have this *prasāda* of Lord Jagannātha, then you will be all right.' Do you know, such is the effect of the *prasāda* of Jagannatha. You people don't believe that! The Master used to say: 'Before you take your food, eat one or two particles of the *prasāda* of Jagannātha.'

On Dashahara Day [celebration honouring the Ganga], the Master asked us to worship Mother Ganga. He told Rakhal: 'Mother Ganga is the living goddess. Today one should worship her.' At that time, Rakhal did not consider the Ganga a goddess. Knowing this, the Master told him this incident [which occurred most likely during the period of his *sādhanā* (spiritual striving)]: 'One day I was walking near the embankment of the Ganga. While walking, I had a doubt—is Mother Ganga a goddess? Then, at that moment, I heard the distinct sound of a conch shell coming from the middle of the river, but could see nothing. Gradually the sound came nearer, and I saw a boy blowing a conch and moving across the water. A goddess was following him. That vision dispelled all my doubts.'[1] Hearing this incident from the Master, Rakhal was much amazed. He said to the Master: 'We don't know all those things. We know only that the Ganga is a river of water, befouled by the boatmen.' When the Master heard this, he said sharply: 'Take care! Don't you befoul the Mother Ganga!' From that day onward, Rakhal was very cautious.

---

[1] According to one of the *purāṇas* (Hindu books of mythology) the waters of the Ganga were brought from the heavens by Bhagīratha, a pure and noble king who used the waters to revive his ancestors, burnt to ashes by a powerful sage, whom they had insulted.

That was also the first year I attended the festival at Panihati with the Master. Rakhal, Bhavanath, I, and others went in Rambabu's carriage. Many other devotees also attended. Navadvip Goswami was was there. Suddenly the Master started to sing with him. Then all of us were startled to see the Master enter into *bhāvasamādhi* (divine ecstasy). His breathing stopped; his face, eyes, even the palms of his hands, reddened. Seeing this ecstatic mood, many persons rushed to take the dust of his feet. We were in somewhat of a fix. Everybody wanted to touch the Master, and though we forbade them, they ignored us. So an uproar started.

Rambabu said to me: 'Hello, Leto, don't try to stop them; let the people touch him and be blessed.' But I didn't obey him, for I knew that if just anybody touched him during the time of his *samādhi,* he experienced a terrible pain.

At last, three of us–Rakhal, Bhavanath, and I–escorted him from the grounds to the parlour. But how difficult it was to resist those devotees! Even as we headed for the parlour, people continued to touch his feet. Then, do you know what Rambabu did? He took a handful of dust from the ground and touched it to the Master's feet, and then started to distribute it among the people. Thus he was released from the crowd.

The following year I also went with him. This time we went by boat. Someone asked Holy Mother to accompany us, but she refused. At this, the Master praised her and said: 'Just mark her intelligence! She refused to go with us to avoid our receiving any adverse comment.' That year the Master took *prasāda* with all, and then danced in ecstasy raising both hands.

Once, at this same festival, the Master was offered five rupees.[2] Other holy men received one or two rupees. The Master did not accept the money; but the manager of the festival insisted and secretly gave the money to Rakhal. Rakhal bought one basket of mangoes with the money and a package of sweets. When the Master came to know of this, he was angry with Rakhal and warned him: 'Never do something like that again. Your acceptance means my acceptance. A bird and a monk should not save anything.'

Two months before Durgā-*pūjā,* the Master accompanied us to Jadu Mallick's house at Pathuriaghata [in Calcutta]. Although I had seen Jadu Mallick before in his garden house [adjacent to the Dakshineswar Temple], I had never been to his home. The goddess, Mother Simhavāhinī, was the presiding deity at Jadu Mallick's, and the Master came to visit the deity. After visiting the shrine, he asked after Jadubabu.

Jadubabu was then lying on a marble table, partly clothed. Seeing the Master, he said: 'Welcome, welcome, young priest. [Jadu commonly referred to Sri Ramakrishna as 'young priest'.] Nowadays you do not seem to come this way any more. But since Mother [the image of Simhavāhinī] is now here, you remember us.'

In reply, the Master said: 'What type of man are you? [The image of the] Mother has come here and you didn't tell me!'

'Young priest,' replied Jadubabu, 'I have never met a man so well informed as you are about Mother. Only yesterday did She arrive, and already you are here. Where is there time to send news to you?'

'All right,' said the Master with a smile, 'now please order some *prasāda* of the Divine Mother. Is it good to return without having anything?'

Jadubabu, without changing his position, ordered someone to bring some *prasāda,* which was instantly done. As soon as the

[2] It is a Hindu custom to honour a holy man with a small gift of money.

Master was ready to leave, Jadubabu said: 'Will you not say hello to my own mother?'

Hearing this, the Master shouted: 'Hello, Jadu's mother! Will you give me a glass of water?' Hearing him, Jadu's mother came downstairs with a glass. The Master took it and sipped once from it.

When he returned to the carriage, the devotees said to him: 'Sir, please do not come again to such a rich man's house. Why do you visit such a person? They did not even ask you to be seated. Why should you be insulted so unnecessarily?'

Hearing these words of concern, the Master said with a smile: 'Hello! These are worldly people, and they are constantly mad for worldly things. Yet in between their worldly thoughts, they worship Mother. Is that not sufficient? You people never even do that. Why should your heads ache over the fact that he asked or didn't ask me to sit down? You came to visit the Mother, and as an extra reward received *prasāda*. Isn't that sufficient for you? Who else would have given you *prasāda* at such a time of day? [The devotees had arrived at an unusual time.] Did you only come to visit Jadu and be offended because he did not ask you to sit?'

Those devotees who had spoken against Jadu became silent. Thus would the Master test us. 'If you want to be a *sādhu* (a holy man),' he would say, 'give up vanity. Pay no heed to whether you are respected or not.'

One day the Master told Jadu: 'You have saved so much for this world; what have you acquired for the next?'

At this, Jadubabu replied: 'O young priest, you are the saviour of my other world. You will rescue me at the time of my death. I wait for that time. If you do not emancipate me, your name, "deliverer of the fallen", will be spotted. So please do not forget me at the time of my final days.'

You see [continued Latu Maharaj], Jadu Mallick had plenty of money; still he couldn't give up the desire for more of it. One day the Master said to him: 'Jadu, you have saved so much money; still you crave more.'

Jadubabu replied: 'Young priest, that desire will not leave me. As you cannot surrender the desire for God, so we worldly people cannot shun our hankering for money. Tell me, why should I renounce wealth? Renouncing everything, you yearn for God; and I, a beggar for His wealth, keep asking for more and more. Now tell me, young priest, is not money His wealth also?'

The Master was very pleased to hear this argument of Jadu. He said: 'If you can understand it in this way, then you have no worry. But tell me, Jadu, do you say these things truthfully?'

Jadu replied: 'Young priest, you know that I cannot hide myself from you.'

On another occasion the Master said to Jadu: 'Previously you would chant the name of God, but now you are unmindful of Him. Why is this?'

Jadubabu said: 'After knowing you, I do not feel the need to call on God. And I have seen that if I chant the name of the Lord, my mind cannot concentrate on worldly affairs. So, forgetting the Lord, I have to look after my wealth.'

'Don't go so far, Jadu,' said the Master. 'Why must you be like an ox yoked to a grinding mill?'

'That is the result of my past actions,' said Jadubabu.

The Master taught me a great deal. Sometimes he would purposefully send me to Loren [Naren, later Swami Vivekananda], and there I would hear many things. Often the Master would arrange a debate between Girish [Girishchandra Ghosh] and Loren. But Loren was powerful—and not afraid to

challenge anyone. He would argue much, and I would report all this to the Master. The Master would now and then test me: 'Naren said all these things and you kept quiet?'

'What do I know?' I would say. 'How can I compete with Loren?'

But the Master would say: 'So many things you heard here and you said nothing? You should have told him that if God did not create these things—who did?'

'But,' I would reply, 'Loren says that this creation is a natural process.'

'Is it possible for nature to create?' answered the Master. 'If there is an effect, a cause must be in the background. There is a powerful being behind this manifestation.'

The Master would teach me all these things. He taught us how to become intoxicated with God.

Do you know? The Master snatched me from the snares of the world. I was an orphan, but he flooded me with love and affection. If he would not have accepted me, I should have been just like an animal, working my days away as a slave. My life would have been for nothing. I am an unlettered man. He would tell me: 'Always keep your mind clean. Don't allow nasty thoughts to enter it. If you find such desires tormenting you, pray to God and chant His name. He will protect you. If the mind still will not remain calm, then go to the temple of the Mother and sit before Her. Otherwise, come here [pointing to himself].'

One day [continued Latu Maharaj], Girishbabu saluted the Master by raising his hands. Then and there the Master returned the salute by bending his waist. Girishbabu again saluted the Master. The Master saluted Girish with an even deeper bending. At last, when Girishbabu fell flat on the ground, the Master blessed him. So later Girishbabu used to say: 'This time the Lord has come to conquer the world through prostrations. In his incarnation as Kṛṣṇa it was the Flute; as Caitanya, the Name [of God]. But his weapon in this powerful incarnation of the present day is the salutation.' Thus the Master used to say: 'Learn to be humble. The ego will thus be removed.'

Once a devotee at Dakshineswar was behaving badly, and I found it impossible to check my irritation. I scolded him, and he was very hurt by my words. The Master knew the pain experienced by the devotee, and when he had gone said to me: 'It is not good to speak such harsh words to those who come here. They are tormented by worldly problems; then if they come here and again are scolded for their shortcomings, where will they go? In the presence of holy company, never use harsh words to anyone. Never say anything to cause pain to another.'

Do you know what he told me next? 'Tomorrow you visit this man and speak such words that will make him forget what you said to him earlier.' So the next day I visited him, and my pride was humbled. I spoke many sweet words to him. When I returned do you know what the Master said: 'Hello! Did you offer him my salutation?'

I was amazed at these words, and said I had not. Then he said: 'Go to him again and offer my salutations.'

So again I went to that man and conveyed the Master's salutation. At this the devotee burst into tears. I was moved to see him weeping. When I returned, the Master said: 'Now your misdeed is pardoned.'

One day Latu Maharaj heard that Sri Ramakrishna wished a picture of Śrī Caitanya for his room. So, the next day he went to Rambabu in Calcutta and obtained one. He then placed it in Ramakrishna's room. When Ramakrishna saw the picture he said: 'Did Ram mind your asking for

this picture? Did you ask for it in my name?'

'No,' said Latu Maharaj, 'I didn't mention your name. I simply asked him for a picture of Caitanya.'

'Oh, indeed!' said Ramakrishna. 'What was Ram's reply?'

'He advised me to go to mother [Rambabu's wife] and ask for one.'

'Good!' said Ramakrishna joyfully. 'You see, never ask for anything in my name.'

On one occasion [said Latu Maharaj], Hazra suddenly said to the Master: 'Gadadhar [Ramakrishna's given first name], you are not going in the right direction. If you continue in this way, people won't respect you long. At least, give them a little show! Why not count beads as I do?'

At this, the Master began to laugh. He called Harish, Gopal, and Rakhal to him and said: 'Do you know what Hazra has been advising me? He tells me to start counting beads. But, you see, I can't do those things now. But he tells me people won't respect me if I don't tell beads. Is this true?'

'Pay no heed to his words,' said Harish. 'He is a rustic, and so is his intellect.'

'Don't say that,' said the Master. 'The Divine Mother is talking through him.'

'What do you say?' said Harish. 'The Divine Mother speaking through Hazra?'

'Yes, yes. Mother conveys Her messages like this,' answered the Master.

Still Hazra's mind was a bit crooked. While practising *japam* (repetition of God's name), he would meditate on worldly things. So he didn't advance. But by holding on to Loren, Hazra crossed over the world. It was due to Loren's insistence that the Master blessed Hazra. After the Master's passing away, Hazra began to think he was an *avatāra*—even greater than the Master.

One day Hazra had a desire to massage the feet of the Master, but the Master refused him. Hazra was hurt by this. He left the room and sat outside in a morose state of mind. At last the Master called to Hazra, and that day only he served the Master.

On another occasion, Hazra expressed a desire to lecture to those who came to the temple. When they arrived to see the Master, he told them: 'Today Sri Ramakrishna is not here. What will you gain by merely sitting in his room? Come here and listen to what I have to say.' But nobody went to him.

Hazra was the bosom friend of Loren. He would prepare tobacco for Loren and have long discussions with him. Loren used to tease him: 'Really, you are a wonderful *siddhapuruṣa* [perfect soul]. I have at last found a rare soul who is constantly telling his beads. Your rosary is very nice—such big and bright beads. There is none like you.'

At this, Hazra would puff up, and tell us: 'You people cannot understand me—not even Ramakrishna. Only Naren knows me.' Just see his pride! Man falls in this way. He used to chant '*Soham, soham*' ['I am He, i.e., God']. The Master would tell us: 'Don't mix with Hazra. Your path is devotion. What will you do with that dry knowledge?'

When I first saw Balarambabu I did not recognize him as a Bengali. He wore a turban [as is customary with Punjabi Sikhs], and carried a staff. He wore a long gown, and an extra cloth over that. He also had a long beard. Now and then we went to his house. The Master used to say: 'Balaram's house is my Calcutta fort, my parlour.'

Balaram would arrange the daily worship of Kṛṣṇa in his home. The Master said that the food there was very pure. I have heard that the Master visited his home hundreds of times, and Balarambabu main-

tained a record of these visits. Balarambabu also visited Dakshineswar very often. The Master once saw Balarambabu in a vision as a member of a *kīrtan* party led by Śrī Caitanya.

Balarambabu would escort the Master to the inner apartment [women's quarters] of his home; but his older cousin, Hariballavbabu did not like it. Girishbabu and Hariballavbabu were close friends, so Girishbabu heard of it. One day, when the Master came to Balaram's place, Girishbabu called on Hariballavbabu, and he came to see the Master. Then both started to weep. I could not understand the cause. I went to Cuttack [where Hariballav would stay] in order to learn the mystery. Hariballavbabu did not disclose it.

On Kālī-*pūjā* day Mother's temple [at Dakshineswar] and the *chāndni* [bathing ghat] would be decorated with lights, Ramlaldada would ask the Master's permission to start the *pūjā*. That day the Master would stay in his room, only visiting the Mother at night. During the whole night, music would be played in the *nahabat* (music tower).

Once Kālī-*pūjā* fell on a Saturday [an auspicious day]. The Master told us: 'Hello! Practise *japam* tonight. If any one practises *japam* on such auspicious nights, he will soon reach perfection.' That night the Master did not allow us to sleep. He sang till the late hours of the night.

At the time of the Jagaddhātrī-*pūjā*, he would accompany us to Madanmohanbabu's house. Once, at his place, a musician played a drum so beautifully that the Master merged into *samādhi*.

Once the Master went to see Keshabbabu, who was sick at the time. But he came down from the upper story when he heard the Master had come. Seeing his illness, the Master said: 'This time I can't understand the will of the Mother.' Within three or four months Keshab passed away.

Another time when he was sick, the Master promised to offer green coconut and sugar to the goddess Siddheśwarī. Keshabbabu recovered, and the Master sent the Mother the promised offerings. On another occasion, the Master went to see a *yātrā* [open-air theatrical performance] at a devotee s home in Dakshineswar. Baburam [later Swami Premananda], Ramlalbabu, and myself went with him. The main actor was a good person and warmly received the Master. The next day he came again to the Kālī temple at Dakshineswar. The Master listened to many beautiful songs from him. At last the Master said: 'Your life will be fulfilled through writing such songs.' He asked Ramlalbabu to copy the songs.

At another time, a *yātrā* party came to the Dakshineswar temple. I listened to the performance the entire night. The Master also was there. It was then I heard about a person who loved another so much that he tunnelled under the earth to meet with his beloved! Just see the force of love! The Master used to say that when the three attachments [of love] become one, then God is realized [the attachment of a chaste wife to her husband, a mother's to her only son, and a householder's to his hoarded wealth].

Once when the Master was sick, Mahendranath Paul came to see him. Before leaving, he gave five rupees to Ramlalbabu. The Master did not know this. That night I noticed him tossing about in bed. I fanned him for a long time, but he still remained restless. Then he said to me: 'Please go to Ramlal for me. That rascal must have done something—otherwise, why am I not getting any sleep?' It was then one or two in the morning. As soon as I brought Ramlal before the Master, he said: 'You rogue. Go and return that money to

the man who gave it to you in my name.' Then Ramlal told the Master everything. That very night he accompanied me to the Doctor's house and rousing him from sleep, returned the money.

One day Rambabu brought a basket of *jilipis* [a kind of Indian sweets] for the Master. But on his way to Dakshineswar he had given a boy one piece from the basket. That day the Master could not eat Rambabu's *jilipis*. He said to him: 'Hello, Ram, never give a part of anything you bring for me. For then it can't be offered to the Divine Mother. And you know that without offering to the Mother first, I cannot eat anything.'

After the Master's accident [in which he broke his arm], Tarak [later Swami Sivananda] came to Dakshineswar. He brought *prasāda,* some holy dust, holy clay, and a rosary from Vrindavan for the Master. Seeing the bandage on the Master's arm, he asked him: 'What happened to your hand?'

The Master replied with a smile: 'While going to take a look at the moon, my feet tripped over a short railing and my arm was broken. The suffering still continues.'

'Is it a dislocation or a fracture?' Tarak asked.

'I don't know,' said the Master. 'These people have simply bandaged my hand. I like to chant the Mother's name with my mind at ease—but this is now impossible. They won't let me even open the bandage. Is it possible to call on the Mother in such a painful state? Sometimes I think what nonsense this bandage is! Let me cut all these bonds and merge into the Divine. Then, again, I think: no, this is just another aspect of the Play. Here also there is some joy.'

Then Tarak said: 'By your mere wish you can be cured.'

'What!' said the Master. 'Can I cure myself by only a wish?' Then he paused for a moment, and added: 'No. Suffering from this affliction is good. For those who come here with desires will see my condition and go away. They won't bother me.' Then he said: 'Mother, You played a clever trick.' At that he started to sing, and then merged into *samādhi.*

On another day in Dakshineswar, a man came into the Master's room and started to talk about worldly things. At this the Master said: 'This is not the place to talk of such things. Please go to the Manager's office.' The man left the room. Then the Master told me: 'Sprinkle the room with Ganga's water. That man is a slave of lust and gold. Seven cubits from the spot where he sat is polluted. Sprinkle the water well.'

(*To be concluded*)

YOGA: A PARASCIENCE

Dr. L. P. Dixit

Often it is attempted to prove that Yoga is a science. The reason is obvious. Science stands for truth, it is free from dogma, is objective in outlook, and dispassionate in character. The great reputation and respectability of science rests, in no small measure, on the belief that truth can be attained through the method of science. The stupendous achievements of science on the physical plane, where it has covered the entire gamut ranging from the domain of subatomic particles to extragalactic space, gives enough hope that given time and opportunity all mysteries which have so far eluded human intelligence will also ultimately get a solution through the method of science.

The popular misunderstanding about what science really means is primarily responsible for this unduly optimistic attitude. The primary function of a scientist is to understand and explain any natural phenomenon. The understanding on the part of the scientist means the precise interdependence of several variables, generally represented in the form of mathematical equations. If an innocent question is put to a scientist as to what a thing really is and why something is as it is, it is treated as an irrelevant or a silly question. The lesson to be learnt is that science really operates within a restricted framework and with a limited objective. It has no tool to explain the 'why' of anything beyond a certain limit. Its primary function is to explain the 'how'. Very often understanding a phenomenon means merely a description of the unknown in terms of something known.

Science attempts to reach Reality by its own method. There is nothing hypothetical in its methodology. But on minute analysis it is evident that if ultimate Truth means something which is devoid of all qualities, then by its very nature, it is not amenable to scientific method of investigation. In all mystic experience, the vision of Reality has been projected in terms of qualities which are incomprehensible in conscious experience of human beings. It is an experience in which the distinction between the subject and object is obliterated; past, present, and future roll into something indefinable. It is no wonder therefore that method of science is not applicable even to explain Reality—not to speak of its attainment. The only meaning that such a statement as 'the method of Yoga is scientific' contains is merely this that just as science works through rational processes of experimentation, observation, and deduction, in the same way Yoga has a sound core of rationality. But beyond a certain limit it transcends analytical reasoning and employs an intuitive process.

In this article an attempt is made to show that Yoga is not a science but a 'parascience'—a discipline that supremely surpasses science and whose principles and premises of the methods of exploration are unique and completely foreign to those of science.

We human beings have got a strong urge to know about things that surround us The knowledge about these things is acquired through our senses. The organized body of knowledge of these things, acquired with or without the help of instruments and techniques, based on certain premises and principles is called science.

The most fundamental assumption of science is that 'some sort of interaction between knower and knowable is always possible'. This assumption is implicit in all scientific studies right from the study of elementary particles, which are known to be

the ultimate building blocks of each and every thing in the universe, to that of clusters of galaxies. The scientific approach of acquiring knowledge of an object may be outlined as follows.

The scientific method of acquiring knowledge consists in recognizing the changes in the signal that is made to interact with the object the knowledge of which is desired. The modulated signal passes through our senses to the brain in which they are processed and finally recognized in some, yet unknown, way to be the representative of the object. Thus scientific method can provide knowledge of only those things that can undergo some change, however small it may be, while interacting with the signal. This requirement limits the scope of scientific methods in acquiring knowledge and hence makes the scientific domain bounded.

In the cases in which the object of investigation is not so tangible and concrete, the fundamental assumption of the scientific approach, namely the existence of the signal between the knowable and the knower, seems violated. In disciplines like logic, mathematics, philosophy, and literature, to mention only a few, it appears that there is no interaction of the signal with the object of the study. But the violation of our fundamental assumption is only apparent and not real. Let us examine the way in which any of these disciplines is developed. If interaction is to occur, there must be at least two distinct things. Now even in these disciplines, which may be called abstract physical sciences since they do not necessarily involve any gross or small physical entities as do normal physical sciences, it is not too difficult to distinguish between the knower and the knowable since the knowable must exercise some influence on the knower if the latter has to become aware of the former. It is this influence, however subtle it may be, that acts as a signal. The signal that the knower receives from any physical object is physical in nature though it may not be perceptible through unaided sense organs, for instance, radio waves. The signal in abstract sciences too is physical in nature but it cannot be detected by any man-made physical means. For instance, the logical processes going on in the mind cannot be or have not so far been detected by any physical means.

In brief, the intervening medium between the knower and the knowable in physical sciences is some physical signal plus the intellect, while in abstract sciences that reduces to only pure intellect. Thus the intellect plays the most important part in acquiring physical knowledge. The presence of the signal is thus a must in physical sciences.

The scientific approach is thus valid so long as the distinction between the knower and the knowable can be made out. The dimensions of the scientific realm are therefore apparently infinite. It is almost impossible to imagine that knowledge, if we can say so, can be acquired even when the distinction between the knower and the knowable vanishes and the two become one and the same. We shall soon see that it is possible. In the scientific approach, however, the knower acquires knowledge about the knowable only through some intervening medium—the signal plus the intellect—different from them. Acquisition of such knowledge is therefore indirect and may be called indirect knowledge (*parokṣa-jñāna*) and such experience may be called indirect experience (*parokṣa-anubhūti*). The indirect experiences get coloured/distorted by the intervening medium—the signal and the intellect. All physical knowledge is indirect, and therefore it is unable to reveal Ultimate Reality.

In contrast to the scientific approach, there is another, which we may call the Yogic approach, that completely eliminates the need of the intervening medium and

enables the knower to acquire the 'knowledge' about the knowable by becoming one with the latter. The quotation marks on the word knowledge imply that its usual meaning is excluded here.

Says an authority on Haṭha-yoga:

> 'How can the knowledge (direct experience of the Absolute) be born in the (pure) mind, so long as the mind and even *prāṇa* (vital air) are not dead? He who can bring about the extinction of the mind (release from the sense of identity with the ego-bound mind) and the *prāṇa* (the ceasing of the *prāṇa's* flow through *iḍā* and *piṅgalā*), attains release; none else can attain it howsoever.'[1]

Acquisition of such knowledge is direct and hence called direct knowledge and such experience direct experience. In such an experience the mind ceases to function and all sorts of signals are absolutely absent. It is said:

> 'The knowable, the already known, and the knowledge (being creations of the mind) are said to be the mind itself. If the knowable and the knowledge are equally destroyed, there is no other way (i.e., with the annihilation of the mind, the only way left is towards the Absolute).'[2]

There is no distinction between the knower and the known. They become one and the same. They have no space-time separation too:

> 'Having abandoned the perceptible—the movable and the immovable—the mind merges with the Absolute and then only the latter remains.'[3]

The two approaches may be summarized thus: The presence of some signal between the knower and the known and their distinguishability characterize the scientific approach, while the absence of any such signal and the indistinguishability of the knower and the known characterize the Yogic approach:

> 'All this movable and immovable (creation) is perceived through mind and, therefore, with the mind's annihilation, the duality (between the knower and the knowable) disappears.'[4]

These two approaches have led to the development of two completely different disciplines: the physical sciences and the Yoga. These disciplines also differ, as we shall see, in their goals and methodologies.

In human experience, there is nothing in the universe which is immutable. Such a 'thing' is rather beyond conception. However, it is just such a 'thing' which Yoga sets itself to attain. Such a 'thing' has been rightly called as attributeless and formless, or in Vedāntic parlance as the Brahman, the Ātman, etc. Such a 'thing' is unchangeable and hence eternal. Since boundaries are a sort of qualification, such a thing is limitless or infinite and hence nothing exists but 'It'. It undergoes no modifications in any circumstances. As the Divine Teacher of the *Gītā* says:

> 'Weapons cannot pierce it; fire cannot burn it; water also cannot moisten it; and wind cannot dry it.'[5]

Science can study only those things that have some attributes and can undergo some sort of change in interacting with the signal. This limitation is due to its very approach. Thus the 'study' of attributeless, changeless Absolute falls completely beyond the do-

---

1 ज्ञानं कुतो मनसि संभवतीह तावत्प्राणोऽपि जीवति
मनो म्रियते न यावत् ।
प्राणं मनो द्वयमिदं विलयं नयेद्यो मोक्षं स
गच्छति नरो न कथंचिदन्यः ॥

Swātmārāmayogīndra's *Haṭhayogapradīpikā* (Sri Venkateswar Press, Bombay), IV. 15.

2 ज्ञेयं सर्वं प्रतीतं च ज्ञानं च मन उच्यते ।
ज्ञानं ज्ञेयं समं नष्टं नान्यः पन्था द्वितीयकः ॥
ibid., IV. 60.

3 ibid., IV. 62.

4 ibid., IV. 61.

5 *Bhagavad-gītā*, II. 23.

main of science. The scientific approach hopelessly fails there.

On the other hand, the Yogic approach has the potentiality of providing us with the 'knowledge' of the Attributeless. The very essence of the Yogic approach consists in stilling the never-resting and ever-bubbling mind so that it gets tuned to 'reflect' the Attributeless or the Ultimate Reality. When this stilled mind is merged with the object of meditation, the knowledge of the latter dawns.[6] It may be noted that, in sharp contrast to the scientific approach, in the Yogic approach the distinction between the subject and object completely melts away. Says Patañjali:

> 'By the restraint of even this (impression, which obstructs other impressions), all being restrained, comes the "seedless" *samādhi.*' [7]

We now turn our attention towards the ways of describing an object in the two approaches. Ways of describing an entity depend on its qualities. All objects in the scientific domain have some positive attributes. Consider water, for instance. It may be described like this: It is a colourless liquid of 1 gm/cm^3 density, etc. Every adjective used affirms some attribute of the water. But how to describe the 'Attributeless'? Nothing exists in our experience which even remotely corresponds to it. Confronted with this difficulty, Yogīs evolved a marvellous way of describing this Attributeless. This way points towards the Absolute by negating everything which can be conceived. As the Upaniṣadic teacher said:

> '(The Absolute is that) wherefrom all words return along with the mind without attaining It.' [8]

We can then describe the Absolute in negative terms only. We can say what It is not, we cannot say what It is. It is not gross, not subtle, not short, not glowing, not shadowy, not attracted, flavourless, smell-less, eyeless, earless, speechless, mindless, breathless, mouthless, not internal, not external, consuming nothing, and consumed by nothing.[9]

Sometimes the description of the Absolute in terms of contradictory qualities appears illogical, as for instance:

> 'Without foot and hand, (yet) swift and grasping, He sees without eye, He hears without ear. He knows whatever is to be known; of Him there is none who knows; They call Him the Primeval, the Supreme Person.' [10]

The description is not, however, inconsistent with logic, but it emphatically states that the Supreme is entirely beyond conception and is beyond common experience. It is something that science cannot dare describe.

In conclusion, we would make it clear that although the Yogic approach is perfectly scientific in the sense of rationality, yet it is completely different from scientific approach. In fact, the Yogic approach by far transcends the limitations of the scientific in that the former is the only approach which can provide direct knowledge of an object or the 'knowledge' of the Ultimate Reality or the Attributeless. Thus Yoga may, more appropriately, be called a parascience instead of science which may represent only limited aspects of the Yoga.

---

6 *Gorakṣapaddhati* (Uttarārdha-grantha), 87, 92-5.

7 तस्यापि निरोधे सर्वनिरोधान्निर्बीजः समाधिः ।
Yoga-sūtras, I. 51.

8 यतो वाचो निवर्तन्ते । अप्राप्य मनसा सह ।
Taittirīya-upaniṣad, II. 41.

9 See *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Upaniṣad,* II.3.6, III.9.26, IV.2.4, IV.4.22, IV.5.15.

10 *Śvetāśvatara-upaniṣad,* III. 19.

PHILOSOPHY AND LIFE

DR. K. B. RAMAKRISHNA RAO

It would be a travesty of truth if anyone were to say he has no philosophy of life. Much less it is true of the modern man for all his denials of philosophy. It is not that a man has no philosophy, but that he has kinds and degrees of it. Maybe he is not conscious of it. What constitutes success in life—whether modern or ancient—depends on what type of philosophy a man follows and to what degree he practises it. As men of the world we choose many vocations. Some are businessmen, some industrialists, some bankers, some doctors, some engineers, some educationists, some politicians, etc. And some may say they are scientists, and yet some there are who say they do nothing but serve the society in the name of God. All these are ways of life, and each has a philosophy behind it, maybe one is practical or empirical, another rational or emotional. Each has a technique of its own, has an ethics of the profession. Each is guided by an understanding of its technique and practice of its ethics. Success in any field depends on the degree of consciousness of purpose and endeavour. Maybe the field is relatively narrow, still it is guided by its own science and philosophy.

NO AGE IS WITHOUT PHILOSOPHY

Each age—apart from individual vocations and professions—has a typical philosophy relative to and depending on the growth of *awareness* of the position of man in the scheme of the universe, of his relationship with it and with other fellow men. For instance, the nineteenth century was identified as an age of materialistic science and philosophy, and the present century is named the age of nuclear science and philosophy. From Newton onwards the age is the modern age of science and technology, with its own philosophy as distinguished from the earlier speculative and theological ages.

SCIENCE AS OBJECT-CONSCIOUSNESS

In terms of awareness or consciousness, the modern age of science and technology symbolizes the expression of 'object-consciousness' (*bahiṣ-prajñā*) of man's spirit directed towards the external or extended universe of life and matter taking them to be ultimate values, and trying to understand, manipulate and control the same to the best advantage of our life in this world. The predominant feature of the object-consciousness is the attraction for the external law, the physical law, the material law, the utilitarian law. The orientation is directed to securing as much physical mastery and consequent use of the physical potential as possible, that is, to build a 'material civilization'.

In a civilization whose main guards are science and technology, such as ours in the twentieth century, the mysteries of universe and life, which used to keep us under the power of superstition and dependence on imaginary gods and demigods, are fast being cleared. And man is being freed from a subservience to false powers to which he submitted for all things of his life: health, wealth, position, status, etc. The whole scheme of one's life was occupied by offerings and sacrifices to the deities of man's imagination. Like science, philosophy too wants man to be guided by convictions of reason. It is a mistake to think that science and philosophy are at loggerheads with each other, that a scientist is not a philosopher and a philosopher not a scientist. They are close friends, if only

we are able to understand the principle of consciousness operative in them. If science is one phase of the principle of consciousness seeking to unravel the outward existence, philosophy is the manifestation of the same spirit directed to unravelling the meaning of existence outward and inward, cosmic and individual. In offering rational and universal explanations of scientific law, science becomes philosophy of science, and through its direction seeks to understand the material of its study. The interpretational aspects of science in revealing the secrets of life and nature are directly the contributions of the philosophical intuitions to link up the piecemeal discoveries of different specializations into a coherent system of scientific knowledge. A world-view of science is a philosophical view of science. Philosophy of science is symbolic of an innate relationship between science and philosophy and gives a clue to the soundness or otherwise of the systems built on scientific laws. Science illumined by philosophy is the most complete manifestation of object-consciousness, as it not only guides investigation but imbues science with a sense of responsibility or objective consciousness.

Virtues and Vices of Science

Modern man is to be reminded of avoiding a perversion arising out of a neglect of the sense of responsibility attached to scientific investigation. The perversion is that science devoid of responsibility degenerates into a simple creed of positivism and secularism. These two are ultimately no virtues of science, for science has a cosmic purpose to serve, not of destruction but promotion. There is every fear now that in the positivistic and secular approaches of physical and natural sciences and of the social sciences like economics and politics, the tendency is towards disrupting a cosmic order and reducing life to a bankruptcy.

The principle of consciousness working as science—it is immaterial whether it is physical or social—proceeds on positive and secular techniques of investigation and to these are due the great achievements of knowledge in the fields constituting the external environment of man, namely, the nature. With this aspect of the spirit of man, philosophy has no quarrel. But where it would like to intervene or comment would be how applications of scientific knowledge are made and how they are put to use, and how they are to be estimated in the whole scheme of consciousness, cosmic and individual. This is the aspect of squaring means with ends, wherein the element of human preferences comes in and indiscretions may occur, which may ultimately lead to setting up a substitute scheme of superstition demanding a surrender to the impersonal forces released by the scientific knowledge—the superstition of science taking the place of superstition in religion or faith as it is commonly called. This is the danger to which the modern man is exposed. A pre-scientific creed of gods and demigods of popular thinking giving place to a scientific creed places man in no better position than before. Not to say ignorance is bliss, but faith exercised a social control in the case of the untutored and unsophisticated. A sustained social order, a code of morality, an unquestioned bond of the family, community or society on members had maintained what is most required in life, namely, harmony and peace. In the case of the enlightened, these two came in naturally, that is, not due to the fears of the unseen, but as dictates of the principle of consciousness we are referring to. Obedience to some custom and tradition is better than questioning them on naturalistic or positive lines, which does the greatest harm in unsettling the minds of the naive and the injudicious. For they are more prone to follow the wrong side of

a question than the right one. Under such distortions of understanding of what constitutes the real spirit of science, naturalism or positivism and secularism work themselves up into the positions of gods and demigods and build up the superstition of science demanding an unquestioned following. Every aspect of life and matter is taken to be natural: sex is natural, and therefore no restraint; violence is natural, and therefore no inhibition; age is natural, and therefore no respect for age; human type is natural, and therefore no inequality. All valuation of this kind is an undervaluation inspired by misrepresentation of naturalism as the sole truth, a naturalism which requires to be corrected by a cosmic consciousness not limiting itself to the positive aspect of nature but extending even to the inner dialectics of individual and social life and order. Under the superstition of science or under the delusions of uncorrected positivism and naturalism man becomes and behaves as too natural, that is, wild!

The 'Inward-consciousness'

Before it becomes too late, mankind will have to understand the reason for the reversal of values. On our analysis, it is due not to the development of science and technology, nor is it due to the scientific methods of investigation, but due to the disregard of the other aspect of the principle of consciousness which runs throughout the cosmic and individual order of existence giving it a valuational import. This is 'inward-consciousness' (*antaḥ-prajñā*) of the spirit of man called wisdom or philosophy. Reversals of value come about in the history of mankind when wisdom or philosophy is sunk to its subliminal or unconscious level. To speak in another way, the progress of man depends on his being fully aware of the principle of consciousness streaming in two ways: the outer and the inner. The outer manifestation of it is science, which meets the external universe of life and matter, analyses them and controls them. The inner manifestation of it is philosophy or wisdom, which gives meaning and value to scientific discoveries as well as develops the cultural aspects of man's personality. It is the evaluational instrument which ought to be kept at the conscious level. A forgetting of this runs the ship of science aground, and the human accumulation of knowledge to disaster, not simply putting them to disuse. The elevation of science is assured not by its use of inductive and positive methods but by the intuitions or insights of fitting a discovery in the general scheme of a world order, an order which is more comprehensive and universal than the immediate prospects of putting an invention or discovery to some relatively practical end. It is a vision which directs science from within, and practically acts as *the* force even for the outward manifestation of consciousness. Any scientific system of thought which does not illumine the prospects of man as a spirit is bound to be disastrous to humanity. It is philosophy which keeps man aware of this inner dialectical movement of the principle of consciousness as wisdom: either one is a scientist, or an economist, or a political or a social worker.

Dialectics of Wisdom or Philosophy

Any civilization, be it Indian or alien, modern or ancient, as long as it is aware of the dialectics of wisdom acting from within, keeps its adventures of science or reason within bounds. Philosophy is another name for this dialectics, and it directs actions of man from the deep depths of spiritual intuition to make life in this world worth living by not only advancing knowledge—the method of science—but by redeeming man from his position in the natural scheme

of things, that is, as an animal, and elevating him from his naturalness of sheer animality to the dignity of a divine person so much above and beyond man as a physical or physiological phenomenon. As physical and natural sciences are evaluated from the point of view of their subscription to a cosmic purpose under philosophy's illumination, so also the social sciences like economics, politics, anthropology, psychology, history, etc., are evaluated for helping to create harmony, cooperation, tolerance, and peace among all the living beings, be it man or beast. Citizens are lawful and dutiful, and men of all professions and vocations are honest under its intimations. It guarantees a richer and fuller life, be it a small community or a world community, be it rural or urban.

Then the question, if there is a place for philosophy in our life—the modern life—has no significance, yet it is to be asked often at least for raising to the level of of awareness the inner stream of value of which it is the supreme manifestation. Who despises wisdom, if it assures happiness and sanity? Surely not the scientist, the politician or the statesman, the economist or a sociologist, the engineer or a doctor. Understanding man as a social being is as much important as understanding him as a product of a natural evolution; still, understanding him as a spiritual being is more significant than understanding him as simply a social or rational animal. It is in man that nature has realized the best species of it. And it is the wisdom in man which opens up the possibilities of a new type of evolution—the 'supernatural' man or 'spiritual' man. All religions and philosophies of the world have stressed in different degrees man's kinship with the Spirit, the Divine, but it is in India alone man has been emphatically proclaimed to be divine, and nothing less than divine in essence.

Indian Wisdom and its Practical Side

Now to the practical side of philosophy or wisdom, and specifically the Hindu or Indian practice of such wisdom. For the Hindu an insight into reality does not mean much unless the truth of it is realized in fact. In Hindu thought there has always been a reference to the practical life wherein the wisdom of philosophy is tested. This is specifically the religious aspect of life, wherein knowledge (science) as wisdom (philosophy) is put to pragmatic test (religion). If this is the true estimate of Hindu religion, then the awesome descriptions of it and of the faith behind it as belief in anthropomorphic gods and rituals must be necessarily wrong. Religion is practice of truth and wisdom, it is not theology or ritualistic sorcery. It is a perspective of relationship of man with the cosmos or the principle behind it, of a relationship with fellow beings—man and other creatures. Starting from the individual the relationship grows circle by circle every time including aspects of the living and the non-living, and reaching far beyond the transitory and the relative. One may call it God, or may prefer not to call it by any name, still with its sweep of a meaningful word and act it hinges man with the rest of existence with a sense of positive relationship. It is in this field of religion that awareness is complete of the dialectics of the spirit of consciousness working as science and philosophy.

Dharma or the Principle of Consciousness

Dharma is the word chosen for this specific type of life. It is not religion in in its restricted or degenerate or debased sense of a cult or a creed. It emanated in the minds of Aryans as cosmic consciousness of an order or reality as *ṛta*. It is with this order that all sciences grapple. Yet the ancient Aryans did not restrict the

scope of it. They saw it as also the order within—a natural order without and a moral or spiritual order within. It is the impersonal law or consciousness manifesting now as natural law and now as moral law without and within of man's life, and any impulse or act of man is directed by such law. It is this *dharma* or *ṛta* which has been identified as the Absolute Existence, Consciousness and Bliss (*sat-cit-ānanda*). It permeates the whole of life, being the very foundation of it. It is the most impersonal principle, and any conception of it in personal terms is relative to our finitude. To say that a basic principle such as this has to find a place in life is an anachronism—for, how can we escape it, it being our own existence? 'If a person knows Brahman as non-existent, he himself becomes non-existent.'[1] But how can we understand it through our lesser or finite perceptions? '...Whence all words together with the mind turn away, unable to reach it. ...'[2] Then it demands a full scale attunement or training to rise to its stature. It is a full time or unceasing occupation in the search for the truth through any vocation or profession, though one may be occupying any position in society. No job or man is inferior for the task, provided the central awareness keeps illumining his life. Be he a Brahman, a Sudra, a merchant or an agriculturist, a doctor or an engineer, it is adherence to the duty which is *dharma*, and no slighting of it, that contributes to his success.

If *dharma* stands for duty, nobody can escape it. If it stands for the cosmic and individual order of existence, no one can be outside it. If it stands for the ideal of fulfilment, none can desist from it unless he wants to be lost as an ignoble creature in the wide realm of the ever dynamic impersonal law.

In this life of ours, whether we like it or not, this principle of consciousness, the impersonal law or *dharma* is actively engaged, and our lives would be worthy to the extent we are aware of it. What brings us to awareness or what keeps before our mind the operative principle behind the universe is philosophy, is wisdom. And it is this which decrees us to be participants in a life of partnership with our fellowmen and with the rest of existence. It is this we call religion. Realization is not getting out of existence. *Mukti* or liberation is not escape. It is growing up to the fullest expectations of existence, the possibilities of which point to the limit of infinity! Science teaches us to grow in one way—the outward way. Philosophy teaches us to grow in a different way—the inward way, qualifying our acts, behaviour, thinking, and feeling. Both are necessary for a wholesome development of human personality. The *Īśā-upaniṣad* is clear about it:

'He who is aware that both *vidyā* (knowledge of self) and *avidyā* (knowledge of the non-self) should be pursued together, overcomes death through *avidyā* and obtains immortality through *vidyā*.'[3]

In knowledge and act we should grow from narrowness or finitude to something beyond it. In our attitudes we should grow from distrust to trust, from cruelty to kindness, from selfishness to selflessness, from rivalry to harmony, from war to peace. It is this movement which is at the basis of spiritual development. The Vedic seers had this dynamics in their minds when they prayed:

Lead me from the unreal to the real. From darkness lead me to light. From death lead me to immortality.'[4]

---

1 असन्नेव स भवति । असद्ब्रह्मेति वेदचेत् ।
Taittirīya-Upaniṣad, II. vi. I.

2 यतो वाचो निवर्तन्ते । अप्राप्य मनसा सह ।
ibid., II. iv. 1.

3 विद्यां चाविद्यां च यस्तद्वेदोभयं सह ।
अविद्यया मृत्युं तीर्त्वा विद्ययामृतमश्नुते ।। 11.

4 *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Upaniṣad,* I. iii. 28.



HUMAN TRENDS

THE IRISH CONFLICT

It is claimed, and invariably by those of an antagonistic nature, that religion has caused a great deal more suffering and misery than it has joy or peace. There is an amount of truth in this if one views religious history from a purely objective point, for 'religious wars' have and still do cause much pain and suffering. The present Israel/Arab conflict is said to be religious as was the Muslim/Hindu division the basis for tearing India apart twentyfive years ago. The present situation in Northern Ireland is also said to be religious. But exactly to what extent does religion have any part in this absurd fight of Christian against Christian ?

'Love thy neighbour' or 'turn the other cheek' are hardly ethics in the mind of the 'Provisional' I.R.A. (Irish Republican Army) hoodlum who plants a bomb in a busy shopping centre. It would seem to be more akin to the Old Testament moral with its exhortation of 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth'—though even this is a matter of question and serious doubt. The same judgement applies with equal validity to the nefarious activities of the U.V.F. (Ulster Volunteer Force—a Protestant body similar in activities to the I.R.A.) ; and one would indeed need to be a saint to see any trace of piety in the motives of the Rev. Ian Paisley. This is especially so when he claims, 'I have hated God's enemies with a perfect hate.' 'God's enemies' here being the Catholics.

The present conflict in Northern Ireland is claimed by some to be a fight over the civil rights of the Catholic minority. The total population of Northern Ireland is one and a half million, and of these the Catholics form an approximate one-third. For a long while there has been a growing discontent over the allocation of jobs, houses and their synonymous economic and social values on the part of the Catholics. In general they feel that the menial and low-paid jobs are given to them whilst the jobs with position and money are saved for the Protestants. Prior to the first riots in 1969 certain concessions were being granted to the Catholics by the Protestants who held most of the authoritative and administrative positions, but perhaps rather grudgingly. Things were not changing fast enough and so the Catholics demonstrated, and these demonstrations turned into the now all too familiar pattern of violence, with petrol bombs, bullets, and barricades. But there are others who feel this bitterness goes much deeper than the reasons just given, and go much further back, and in fact the majority of Irishmen are tending to live in the 17th century rather than in the 20th.

In the 10th century Ireland was the intel-

lectual, artistic heart of Europe. It was also during this period, and earlier, that the Celtic Irish Church and monasticism were at their height of power and fervour. Men from all over Europe would travel to Ireland for their education and personal development. And many an Irishman could be found in the courts of a European king or prince as scholar or adviser. Irish culture had a distinct and beautiful character as may be seen from even a cursory study of the works of art and literature that remain with us today that have few equals in their originality of form and independence of spirit. Since this period and its subsequent decline, the reasons of which have no relevant bearing on our subject here, Irish culture has still continued to produce great men and notably men of letters—writers, poets, playwrights, as also artists.

Catholic Ireland has little ground or reason to love the English and the Protestants. The cause for this goes back some eight hundred years when, in the mid-12th century, in 1155, Pope Adrian, the only English Pope, generously granted the English the land of Ireland. Ever since this date the English have tried to subject the fierce Gaelic tribes and earls. This was not put into full force until the time of the Reformation when English colonies were 'planted' in Ireland, and invariably with a great deal of bloodshed on the side of the Irish. '... All open opposition was crushed out by the energy and the ruthlessness of the new Lieutenant; and a famine which followed his ravages completed the devastating work of the sword...' 'The history of Ireland, from its conquest by William the Third up to this time (late 18th century) is one which no Englishman can recall without shame.'[1] These two short sentences from an English history book summarize the whole unpleasant history. And so the bitter story continued; the battles, the infamous 'plantation' in Ulster of 1608, when the land of the Irish earls was given to English and Scottish colonizers, and a series of brutally economic and socially repressive measures imposed by the Protestants upon the Catholics of Ulster. In the years following 1608 there were still more battles of the English against the Irish; notable amongst these was the Battle of the Boyne in 1690, which is still celebrated by the Irish Protestants with a rather antagonistic fervour. By the year 1700 the Catholics found themselves owning only one-seventh of their own land. The bitterness grew with time and was nourished by even further repressive measures and more brutality on the part of the Protestants against the Catholics. By the present century the Catholics had started to resist. In 1916 there was the now famous 'Easter Rising' in Dublin. The I.R.A. was founded and the fighting continued against the British until 1921 when Independence was finally granted. Ireland was divided into the six counties which make Northern Ireland and the twentysix counties that constituted the Irish Free State. In 1937 the Irish Free State broke its allegiance with the Crown and in 1949 the Republic of Ireland, or Eire, was founded. But the bloodshed, as we know only too well, did not end there. In 1968 the first major conflict between the Catholic civil rights' demonstrators and the predominantly Protestant Ulster police took place in Londonderry. In August of 1969 British troops were on Irish soil again to establish 'peace lines' to hold the parties apart. July 1970 found curfews established in Catholic areas after the I.R.A. had attacked British troops. Internment, or imprisonment without trial, for I.R.A. suspects was introduced in August of 1971—tones of a police state which only seemed to increase the violence. And finally in March of 1972 direct rule

[1] J. R. Green: *A Short History of the English People* (Macmillan & Co., London, 1878), pp. 441, 787.

was imposed by the British government after the disbandment of the Ulster Parliament. All the while during this period the number of British troops was increased until it is now around 21,000.

So today Ulster still smoulders. If one talks to those who are directly involved in the full impact, the tragedy is revealed: '... everyone is frightened; the Catholics, the Protestants, the soldiers and policemen. You cannot walk down the road with your hands in your pockets (for you may be carrying a concealed gun or bomb). My sister was walking with her friend and a bomb exploded on the other side of the road. She was thrown about ten yards. Her arm and ribs were broken; she had bad concussion; and her face.... She is still in hospital (weeks later). She is only seventeen....' Perhaps an even greater tragedy will only be seen in later years. For what of the minds of the children: the children who see their parents' and brothers' faces contorted with fear or hate; who grow in an atmosphere of ruined houses; who learn to make petrol bombs with sand and petrol; who learn to hate and lie and in some cases to even assist to kill. Those who grow with violence will not hesitate to use it in the future. It becomes an accepted norm of behaviour.

Guerilla warfare is the war of today and the future. No longer do two parties face each other. No longer the *dharma* of the *kṣatriya*. But rather a hidden bomb, a sniper's bullet piercing the flesh, cutting its way through tendons and splintering the bones of the unsuspecting and often innocent victim. A priest dies, caught in cross-fire, as he administers last rites to a man he thought was dying. The man survived... An eighteen-month-old child dies in its seven-year-old sister's arms... The guerilla fights from an alley, the roof top, the speeding car—there is little courage in placing a bomb in an office that will kill or mutilate he knows not whom. But this mode of fighting is the voice of the suppressed minority; the unleashed anger of those who wish, however perversely to express their views, to claim their 'rights'; the fight against the establishment, against authority and power. This was the case with the ruthlessly suppressed 'Black Panthers' and 'Weathermen' in the U.S.A.; and to a lesser degree, in England, with the 'Angry Brigade'. Two hundred guerillas hold the city of Belfast, with a population of four hundred thousand, to ransom and in fear.

And so where do things stand today? What are they really fighting for? The Catholics in Northern Ireland want unity with the Republic of Ireland, and this is one reason why the I.R.A. is involved. Mr. John Lynch, the Prime Minister of the Republic of Ireland, would also like unity as his speech of last year stated: 'We believe Ireland is one country, one nation, one people. I think it is both small enough and big enough to live together. Ireland was one for centuries and was divided only in the last 50 years.'[2] On the other hand the Protestants would fight this with even more violence as they would then lose their present position of power as being the majority force, as at present they constitute two-thirds of Northern Ireland's population. Whilst if they were to unite with the Republic they would constitute only an approximate quarter. The population of the Republic is some two million seven hundred thousand. A stalemate.

But what part if any does religion play, or could play, in this bitter confused struggle? It is very easy to sit and theorize; to sit and claim that others should act in this or that manner. But wars are not rational; hate and fear do not reason before they act; they act, and the act is often only motivated by the feeling of the moment

---

2 *Time*, 20 September, 1971.

and the mood of a crowd or momentary state of weakness or blindness. Invariably, these things start from a minor incident, a joke, a taunt—and then an unsuspected reaction and bloodshed. And thus it escalates from a harmless act to deadly seriousness; suddenly old passions and bitter emotions are roused and the feelings of an individual become that of a crowd. The crowd moves and acts in its dull, awful, unthinking way and soon a shop or house is burning, a car smashed and overturned, and a body lies embracing the road, its blood drying amidst the dirt. Where is there religion in this? We may perhaps claim that religion is only in this present conflict in so far as it is the basis of division, and no more than this. Beyond this it is only the motivation of hate and the acts of misguided jingoistic hoodlums.

From the very broad and brief historical background above it is perfectly obvious that the Catholics have little reason for loving their present neighbours. But it is perhaps in this very fact, this situation, that their strength could lie. An 'eye for an eye' is an ethic that helps no one. Revenge is not sweet. And yet this is no time to talk of religious tolerance, for this would only be a rather pious and misplaced platitude. Old wounds do not heal easily. And the wounds in Ireland are not only old but also deep; deep in the minds of the people. But as Harold Wilson, Britain's Labour Party leader, said, 'For God's sake forget the past, forget William III. Forget about a long-dead Dutchman and remember you're living in the reign of Elizabeth II. Forget about the struggles of 50 years ago. Forget about the Easter Rising.'[3] Perhaps we should add 'forgive'; 'forgive for what has been done in the past'. To forgive and to forget—if this were achieved by both Catholics and Protestants,—this would in truth be an act of religion. If both parties can achieve this then this would be a thing of glory and credit to Irish history and to the Irish nation, and a united Irish nation of the future, as also a guide and inspiration for resolving similar such conflicts throughout the world. But until this understanding is reached, the Protestants and Catholics in Ireland, who are actively involved in this crisis, are such in name only but not in act or thought.

—'T'.

---

3 *Time*, 6 September, 1971.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN THIS NUMBER

Questions and answers are from: 'M': *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna,* Tr. by Swami Nikhilananda, Sri Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore, Madras, 1947. Questions: 1, p. 366; 2, pp. 422-3; 3, p. 592; 4 and 5, pp. 614-5.

The words quoted in 'Onward For Ever!' are from: *The Complete Works,* Vol. VI (1963), p. 354.

The journey of the spiritual aspirant, as John Bunyan has portrayed, progresses through many obstacles, dangers, and pitfalls. Dryness is one such obstacle. In this month's *Editorial* we have endeavoured to analyse some of the causes of spiritual dryness in the light of the teachings of saints and sages.

A sincere and unrelenting search for truth in the external world of phenomena will also lead man to the same conclusions as the search within led the ancient Indian sages. The discoveries of modern physics bear testimony to this assertion. In 'Man and the Universe', Prof. Priyadaranjan Ray, M.A., D.Sc. (Hon.), F.N.I., a renowned Indian scientist, points out that the actual perception of the Absolute Truth is impossible through intellect and reason but becomes possible through intuitive knowledge.

In our June issue appeared the 'Biographical Introduction' of the forthcoming book on Swami Adbhutananda. Here we are offering a few reminiscences of Sri Ramakrishna which will form a part of the book. Through these reminiscences emerges a vignette of the God-man of Dakshineswar about whom Swami Vivekananda once said that when people knew 'what he really was, then *men*—real men—will be made'. Another instalment of these reminiscences will appear in a subsequent issue of this Journal.

Swami Chetanananda is the Assistant minister at the Vedanta Society of Southern California, Hollywood, and Brahmachari Bhumachaitanya, a monastic member there. These reminiscences were originally recorded in Bengali.

In 'Yoga: A Parascience', Dr. L. P. Dixit argues that Yoga, the Vedāntic way of seeking the ultimate realization, has certain characteristics which differentiate it from science. Though in its rational basis and experimental approach Yoga resembles science, in its aspect as *aparokṣa-jñāna* or direct knowledge it differs totally from it. Dr. L. P. Dixit, M.Sc, (Tech.), Ph.D., is attached to the Central Fuel Research Institute (Plasma Physics Section), Dhanbad, Bihar.

'Science without religion is lame, religion without science is blind,' observed Dr. Einstein using a well-worn image. But men of religion would prefer to have it slightly differently, assigning the function of legs to science and eyes to religion! Because true vision is born of wisdom which again is born of religious realization. 'Philosophy and Life' by Dr. K. B. Ramakrishna Rao is a beautiful attempt to harmonize science and philosophy (or wisdom), and it incidentally distils some practical wisdom which can serve as valuable guidance for humans in their journey through life. The author is the Professor of Hindu Philosophy, University of Mysore.

Ireland is smouldering. It blazes and smoulders alternately. It has become a historical habit, as it were, of the country. This fire of irrational internecine hatred is

being transmitted from one generation to another. Will the fire ever be quenched? We hope and pray that it will. We have hopes in the innate sanity of humanity despite Ian Paisleys and de Valeras. We pray that the message and the sacred, compassionate heart of Jesus will cool the brains of Christians, both Catholics and Protestants, in N. Ireland, and enlighten them with divine reasonableness.

A broad analysis of the Irish conflict is brought to our columns by a spiritual pilgrim from Great Britain, at present in India, who modestly styles himself by the first letter of his Hindu name.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

SRI SANKARAVIJAYA OF ANANTANANDAGIRI: ED. BY N. VEEZHINATHAN, Published by the Centre of Advanced Study in Philosophy, University of Madras, 1971, pp. 209+97, Rs. 16/-.

The book under review is a biography in Sanskrit written by Anantanandagiri who acknowledges Sankara as his *paramaguru* (i.e. *guru's guru*) in the very first line of his work—*anantānandagiriraham apratihatājnasya bhagawatah śisyah mama paramaguroravatāraprayojanam varṇayāmi*. Improbable though it appears Anantanandagiri mentions at some places in the work that he was himself present in some of the controversies which Sankara had with his opponents along with the other disciples of the Master. Twice the name Anantanandagiri (in ch. 4th and ch. 65th) is mentioned in the work in the list of disciples who were with Sankara. It is possible, as Dr. Mahadevan remarks in the Introduction, that the reference may not be to our author but to another disciple of Sankara bearing the same name. K. T. Telang is definitely of opinion that Anantanandagiri was not a contemporary of Sankara. Be that as it may, settling the time and date of the authors of our Sanskrit works is always a refractory task and seldom above dispute.

Coming to the contents, the work describes Sankara's itineracy as a *sannyasin*, beginning with Madhyarjuna and ending with Kanchi where Sankara spent the last years of his life. Everywhere Sankara met the leaders of non-Advaitic faiths and cults, heard their views, defeated them in argumentation and finally won their allegiance to the Advaita. In many a work, the story of Sankara's 'conquest' is described. The book under review is one amongst these. It resembles in many ways another work of a similar nature called *Sankara-digvijaya* written by Madhavacarya which with the commentary of Dhanapati Suri on it called *Dindima* is very popular.

The most stirring and colourful amongst the recorded controversies of Sankara is that which he had with the great Mimamsaka Kumarila Bhatta lying on his funeral pyre and, as the story goes, already half-burnt and subsequently under his guidance with his disciple Mandana Misra and his learned wife Sarasavani. The conversion of Mandana Misra to Advaita and his becoming one of the foremost of Sankara's *sannyasin* disciples is well known.

What was it that Sankara controverted and what brought an easy victory to him over his adversaries? Briefly, as the reader of the book will gather from its pages, it is this. With his consummate dialectical skill and vast erudition in *sruti* and *sastras,* Sankara pointed out to his opponents that the various gods and goddesses which they worshipped were not the Primordial or the First Principle which was none other than Brahman, the Cause of creation, sustenance and dissolution of the universe. He quoted in his support relevant *sruti* texts. The gods and goddesses themselves owed their origin to this Brahman. He further pointed out that *moksha* could be nothing short of the realization of the essential identity of the soul with this Brahman. He also pointed out to the followers of the various cults the futility of branding with hot iron the symbols of their cults on their own limbs as there was no sanction for all these in the *sruti* or the scriptures. The real *tapas* was an inner discipline of the mind. Perfection in the *sadhana-sampat* was the all-important thing in a genuine spiritual life.

Copious excerpts from the versified commentary of Dhanapati Suri on *Sankara-dig-vijaya* are given

in the Appendix which enhance the value of the book. In preparing the present edition of the volume, Dr. Veezhinathan has consulted a good number of manuscripts and given the different readings of the texts in the footnotes. There is an Index and a lengthy *Corrigendum* at the end of the book.

The book is, on the whole, a valuable addition to biographical literature on Sankara and the author deserves our congratulations on his painstaking work.

DR. S. N. L. SHRIVASTAVA

BOOKS RECEIVED

EDUCATION: THEORIES AND PRACTICE, BY SWAMI LOKESWARANANDA, Published by The Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama, Narendrapur, 24 Parganas, West Bengal, Rs. 0.75.

SWAMI RAMAKRISHNANANDA: THE APOSTLE OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA, BY SWAMI TAPASYANANDA, Published by Sri Ramakrishna Math, Madras 4, Rs. 4.50.

YOGI RAMSURATKUMAR: THE GODCHILD TIRUVANNAMALAI, BY TRUMAN CAYLOR WADLINGTON, Published by The Theosophical Society, Adyar, Madras 20, price not stated.

CHITSHAKTI VILAS: THE PLAY OF CONSCIOUSNESS, BY SWAMI MUKTANANDA, Published by Shree Gurudev Ashrama, Ganeshpuri, Vajreshwari, Thana, Maharashtra, Rs. 15/-.

SRI RAMAKRISHNAKARNAMRITAM: BY OTTUR UNNI NAMBUDIRIPAD, Published by the author, Thulasivanam, Mayannur, Ottappalam, Kerala, Rs. 1.25.

NEWS AND REPORTS

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION, SRI LANKA

CONSECRATION OF THE NEW SHRINE AND INAUGURATION OF MISSION ACTIVITIES AT KALLADI UPPODAI, BATTICALOA

The consecration of the new shrine of Sri Ramakrishna and the inauguration of the Mission activities in the new premises at Kalladi Uppodai took place on 27 May 1972. The function commenced in the morning with the *mangalarati* at the old shrine of the Ashrama, followed by a procession in which the portraits of Sri Ramakrishna, Holy Mother, and Swami Vivekananda were taken to the new shrine at the new premises. The portraits were installed there by Swami Prematmananda, the head of the Sri Lanka Branch of the Mission. Special puja and *homa* were performed. A report outlining the history of the activities of this centre was read in Tamil. Benedictory messages from Srimat Swami Vireswaranandaji Maharaj, President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, and many others were read in Tamil and English.

Swami Prematmananda performed the opening ceremony of the new Ashrama Building at 11 a.m. This was followed by a lunch served with consecrated food to all those who were present at the function. Large numbers of people from local and distant places attended the ceremony.

A public meeting was held at 6 o'clock in the evening. It was largely attended, and presided over by Swami Prematmananda. A detailed report about the history and activities of the Students' Homes (orphanages) in the Batticaloa and Amparai Districts was read out. Among those who addressed the meeting were Sri K. Thiagarajah, the Mayor of the Batticaloa Municipality, and Sri S. Somasuntheram, O.B.E., Member of the Board of Management of the Sri Lanka Ramakrishna Mission. At the end the gathering was entertained with vocal and devotional music.

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION ASHRAMA, NARENDRAPUR, 24 PARGANAS, WEST BENGAL

REPORT FOR THE PERIOD 1966-67 TO 1969-70

The special field of activity of this Ashrama is Education. Students coming from all over India

are selected on the basis of merit determined by an open test. Those from displaced families and backward classes and those who are physically or otherwise handicapped get preference. Out of a total of 1400 students in residence, 400 or more receive financial assistance. The activities during this period under report were as follows:

Multipurpose School: Around 750 students reside in ten separate hostels. Junior Section of the school, comprising classes VI and VII, has a separate campus. For higher secondary studies, the school offers the choice of six streams—Science, Humanities, Commerce, Fine Arts, Agriculture and Technology. The school has two media of instruction—English and Bengali. The results of Higher Secondary Examinations are uniformly brilliant.

College: Affiliated to the University of Calcutta and is entirely residential. It is equipped to teach only Honours courses in Physics, Chemistry, Mathematics, English, Economics, History, and Statistics. 303 students are now on the roll. The results of University Examinations are uniformly good.

Students' Home: Now supports fully or partially 400 students studying in the institutions of the Ashrama or outside. They include boys who come from displaced families or backward classes, or are physically or otherwise handicapped.

Besides the libraries of school, college, and other institutions, there is also a *Central Library* for teachers, students, and local people which contains 59 journals and 36,305 volumes of university books and reference books.

Junior Technical School: For local boys, 120 students are undergoing a three-year Junior Diploma course in Engineering. *Regional Training Centre* offers courses meant for teachers who are going to work in Pre-vocational Training Centres for the school drop-outs after the primary stage in different States of the Eastern Region. In the Pre-vocational Training Centre the school drop-outs are being trained in Carpentry, Fitting, Turning, Moulding, Smithy, Gas welding, and Sheet Metal. 74 poor local students are now on the roll. Again the Ashrama offers other trade courses like Book-binding, Carpentry, Poultry-keeping for local boys.

Blind Boys' Academy: One of the foremost institutions of its kind in the country, gives education, training etc. to 100 blind students. This Academy attempts to educate the students up to class VIII. According to fitness and ability, a boy gets the facility for higher education in Multipurpose School, Ashrama's College, and even in Post-graduate courses outside. In all such cases, the Academy provides Braille text-books and other necessary things. The performances of the students in Higher Secondary and University Examinations are satisfactory. Elementary music is compulsory for blind boys. Those who have talent for music are given necessary encouragement. Some training in Book-binding, Cane, Coir, Bamboo and Plastic work is compulsory for them. Suitable students get training in handling lathes and similar power-driven machines and trained students can maintain themselves temporarily by working in the Sub-contract Workshop of the Ashrama. 7,982 braille books are kept in a small library to help the blind students and one press is set up to emboss braille books for blind students of West Bengal, Assam and Orissa. The Academy trains teachers of blind institutions situated in these States.

This Ashrama is doing a great service for *Harijan Welfare* at Narendrapur. Besides that, Ashrama's branch *Vivekananda Social Welfare Centre* of North Calcutta is running one Pre-Basic and Basic School; two adult education centres, one for men and the other for women; gives training in handicrafts and runs a charitable dispensary for Harijan population.

Institute of Social Education and Recreation: Runs 13 adult literacy and social education centres to improve the conditions of villages. 100 students of the *Gramsevak Training Centre* are learning scientific farming, poultry-keeping, etc. Teachers and students of the Ashrama usually come forward to help the local people in times of natural calamities.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA ASHRAMA, RAJKOT

Report for 1970-71

Activities of this Ashrama are as follows:

The Ashrama has regular temple services—*puja, arati*, prayer, *homa* etc. Regular religious discourses are arranged. People in large numbers attend the special celebrations. The monks also preach the religious ideas amongst distant villagers.

The Ashrama has so far published 75 valuable books in Gujarati language. Handy books on Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda are also coming out at a subsidized price.

Medical Service: One free Ayurvedic and Homeopathic outdoor dispensary is run by the Ashrama. It serves over 65,000 poor patients.

Vidyarthi Mandir accommodates 80 school students and is run on the Gurukula system. Boys, mostly from the villages, are admitted without distinction of caste, colour, and creed. Every care is taken to ensure their all round development—

physical, intellectual, moral, and spiritual. Some poor but meritorious students are also maintained free or part-free. Stipends are awarded on the basis of merit. S.S.C. results obtained by the inmates are uniformly excellent.

Free Library with Reading Room has 18,050 books, 127 dailies and monthlies; a valuable reference section having a membership of 850. Besides these, there are one separate Reading Room for ladies and one children's section.

Other special features of the Ashrama are: Swami Vivekananda Centenary Memorial Essay Competition for educational institutions throughout the State, Elocution and Recitation Competition for students etc.

Relief: The Ashrama had participated in the recent Assam flood relief, scarcity and drought relief of Bihar, U.P., and W. Bengal. It conducted the rehabilitation work of 23 devastated villages of Surat. It also served the people of drought affected Kutch by giving them food, cloth, agricultural assistance etc. During this period, the Ashrama organized another relief work in Rajkot and Surendranagar` affected by heavy rains and flood. It participates in the relief work for refugees of Bangla Desh being conducted by the Ramakrishna Mission.

The Ashrama has proposed to construct a new temple, foundation stone of which is already laid by Revered Swami Vireshwaranandaji, President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission.

Needs of the Ashrama: A Study hall for the Students' Home, Rs. 1,00,000; a Hobby centre for the Students' Home, Rs. 1,00,000; Quarters for monks including repairs, Rs. 50,000; funds for Subsidized Ramakrishna-Vivekananda literature, Rs. 1,00,000; Reconstruction (started) of the dilapidated temple yet to be secured Rs. 5,00,000; Endowment or annual contributions for the maintenance of free and part-free students and a new Outdoor Dispensary building.

ERRATA

Prabuddha Bharata October 1972

p. 411, footnote 8: *for* तस्माद् हैव *read* तस्माद्उमावावयाद् हैव

p. 414, footnote 5: *for* कीटषु *read* कीटेषु

p. 423 footnote 13, line 4: *for* अजोऽसि ओजी *read* ओजोऽसि ओजो

p. 428, Col. 2, line 1: *for* Jayrambati *read* Kamarpukur.

RAMAKRISHNA-VIVEKANANDA
AND
VEDANTA LITERATURE

BOOKS ON SRI RAMAKRISHNA

	Price
* Life of Sri Ramakrishna Foreword by Mahatma Gandhi Limp Bound:	11·00
De Luxe:	16·00
* The Life of Ramakrishna By Romain Rolland	5·75
* A Short Life of Sri Ramakrishna	1·25
Sri Ramakrishna And His Mission—By Swami Ramakrishnananda	0·62
* Sri Ramakrishna And Swami Vivekananda—By Jawaharlal Nehru	0·60
* Teachings of Sri Ramakrishna	5·00
De Luxe	7·00
Sayings of Sri Ramakrishna	6·00
* My Master—By Swami Vivekananda	0·70
* Ramakrishna and His Message —By Swami Vivekananda	2·00
* Ramakrishna And His Disciples—By Christopher Isherwood	12·50
Sri Ramakrishna The Great Master	30·00
The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna	30·00
Ramakrishna Upanishad By C. Rajagopalachari	1·50
Tales And Parables of Sri Ramakrishna	3·00
Words of the Master *Compiled* By Swami Brahmananda Board:	1·25
Cloth:	2·00
* The Apostles of Sri Ramakrishna	7·50

BOOKS ON HOLY MOTHER

	Price
Holy Mother Sri Sarada Devi—By Swami Gambhirananda Board:	12·50
Cloth:	14·00
Sri Sarada Devi The Holy Mother—By Swami Tapasyananda & Swami Nikhilananda Board:	12·00
Cloth:	13·50
Holy Jairambati By Swami Tejasananda	1·25
* The Message of Holy Mother	0·30

WORKS ON AND OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

	Price
* The Life of Vivekananda And The Universal Gospel—By Romain Rolland	6·25
* Vivekananda (A Biography) By Swami Nikhilananda Paper bach	3·50
De Luxe	6·25
The Master As I Saw Him—By Sister Nivedita	5·50
* The Story of Vivekananda (illustrated for children)	4·50
* A Short Life of Swami Vivekananda	1·50
* Swamiji and His Message —By Sister Nivedita	1·20
* The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda (In Eight Volumes) Per Vol. Board:	9·00
Cloth:	12·50
Per Set. Board:	70·00
Cloth:	96·00

		Price
* Raja Yoga	Board :	3·00
	Cloth :	4·75
* Bhakti Yoga	Board :	1·25
	Cloth :	3·00
* Karma Yoga	Board :	1·25
	Cloth :	3·00
* Jnana Yoga	Board :	3·60
	Cloth :	5·50
* Selections From Swami Vivekananda		9·00
* Lectures from Colombo to Almora		5·50
* Swamiji's Message to A Disciple		4·50
* Chicago Addresses		0·75
* Modern India		0·75
* The East and the West		2·00
* Practical Vedanta		1·25
* My Life and Mission		0·60
* In Defence of Hinduism		0·50
* Essentials of Hinduism		0·75
* Teachings of Swami Vivekananda		4·00
* Letters of Swami Vivekananda		8·50
* To the Youth of India		2·00
* Caste, Culture, and Socialism		1·50
* In Search of God and Other Poems		3·00
* Advaita Vedanta		0·80
* Thoughts on the Gita		1·00
* Sadhanas or Preparations for Higher Life		0·50
* Thoughts of Power		0·40
* Work and Its Secret		0·60
* The Powers of the Mind		0·50
* Bhakti or Devotion		1·00
* Life After Death		0·60
* Is Vedanta the Future Religion		0·60
* Our Women		0·90
* Memoirs of European Travel		1·75
* Swami Vivekananda on India and Her Problems		1·75
Vedanta Philosophy		1·00
Hinduism		1·50
Education		2·00
Women of India		0·25

		Price
Inspired Talks	Paper :	3·00
	Cloth :	4·00
* Swami Vivekananda in America : New Discoveries		18·00
* Reminiscences of Swami Vivekananda		7·50
* Swami Vivekananda Birth Centenary Commemoration Volume		30·00
Vivekananda : His call to the Nation		0·50
* Parliament of Religions		18·00
Six Lessons on Raja-Yoga		0·75
Realisation and Its Methods		2·00

SANSKRIT WORKS WITH ENGLISH TRANSLATION

* Shrimad-Bhagavad-Gita—By Swami Swarupananda		7·50
* Brihadaranyaka Upanishad (With Shankara's Commentary)—By Swami Madhavananda		14·00
* Eight Upanishads—Vol. I (With Shankara's Commentary)—By Swami Gambhirananda		9·00
* —do—	Vol. II	8·50
* Minor Upanishads—By Swami Madhavananda		2·00
* Bhasa-Paricceda with Siddhanata-Muktavali—By Swami Madhavananda		4·00
* Ashtavakra Samhita—By Swami Nityaswarupananda	Paper :	4·00
	Cloth :	5·00
* Aparokshanubhuti or Self-Realization of Shankaracharya		1·50
* Vedanta Sara of Sadananda	Paper :	2·75
	Cloth :	4·00
* Altar Flowers	Paper :	3·75
	Cloth :	5·00

	Price
* Vairagya-Shatakam of Bhartrihari	1·50
* Vivekachudamani of Sri Shankaracharya Board:	4·50
Cloth:	5·50
Shrimad-Bhagavad-Gita (With the Gloss of Shridhara Swami) By Swami Vireswarananda	7·00
The Upanishads (Text with word-for-word meaning and running translation in English)	
Isha	1·00
Kena	1·00
Katha	1·50
Prashna	1·50
Mundaka	1·50
Mandukya	0·75
Aitareya	1·50
Taittiriya	2·00
Shevtashvatara	2·00
Chhandogya Upanishad By Swami Swahananda Board:	8·50
Cloth:	9·50
Brihadaranyaka Upanishad	9·00
Mandukya Upanishad (With Gaudapada Karika and Shankara's Commentary—By Swami Nikhilananda)	10·00
Mahanarayanopanishad—By Swami Vimalananda	6·00
Panchadashi—By Swami Swahananda Board:	9·50
Cloth:	11·00
Atmabodha of Shankaracharya —By Swami Nikhilananda	4·00
Upadesha Sahasri of Shankaracharya By Swami Jagadananda	4·50
The Divine Life—By Swami Yatiswarananda	3·00
Vedic Prayers—By Swami Sambuddhananda	1·50
Panchikaranam	2·00

	Price
Universal Prayers—By Swami Yatiswarananda Board:	4·00
Clotr:	5·50
Vakya Vritti And Atmajnano-Padesha Vidhi of Shankara-charya	1·50
Laghu-Vakya-Vritti	1·25
* Brahma Sutras—By Swami Vireswarananda	9·00
Narada Bhakti Sutras—By Swami Tyagishananda	4·50
Stotraratna or The Hymn-Jewel of Shri Yamunacharya	0·75
Devi Mahatmya or Durga Saptashati—By Swami Jagadishwarananda	2·50
Drig-Drishya Viveka—By Swami Nikhilananda	1·50
Yatintramatadipika of Shriniva-sadasa—By Swami Adideva-nanda	7·00

PRACTICAL SERIES

* Spiritual Practice By Ananda Paper: 2·50 Cloth:	3·50
* The Message of Our Master By The First Disciples of Sri Ramakrishna	2·50
* In the Hours of Meditation—By F. J. Alexander	2·50
* Common Sense About Yoga—By Swami Pavitrananda	1·50
* Spiritual Talks By The First Disciples of Sri Ramakrishna Paper: 5·00 Cloth:	6·00
* Modern Man in Search of Religion By Swami Pavitra-nanda	1·50
* Paramartha Prasanga (Towards The Goal Supreme)—By Swami Virajananda	5·00
For Seekers of God	9·00

ADVAITA ASHRAMA, 5, Dehi Entally Road, Calcutta-14

Editor : SWAMI BUDHANANDA, Joint Editor : SWAMI TADRUPANANDA
Printed by SWAMI SMARANANANDA at General Printers & Publishers (Pvt.) Ltd., 119 Dharamtolla St., Cal.-13 and Published by him for Advaita Ashrama (Mayavati), from 5 Dehi Entally Road, Calcutta 14 *on November 1, 1972.*
Cover & Art Plates Printed by Sun Lithographing Co., Calcutta 10

Phone : 44-2898 Registered No. C - 3780

Annual Subscription : India, Burma and Ceylon - Rupees Eight, U. S. A. - Four Dollars,
Other countries £ 1·00, Single Copy : Inland - 75 P.

SUN LITHO